

# A STUDY OF THE CAMBRIDGE SUB-REGION

## PART ONE





# A STUDY OF THE CAMBRIDGE SUB-REGION

A Report by  
Professor J. Parry Lewis  
of Manchester University

## PART ONE



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The Study Team consisted of:

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| Christine Tullett | (May 1971–July 1973)         |
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| R. Sherwood       | (September 1972–August 1973) |

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|---------------|------------------------------|
| M. J. Bridges | (September 1971–August 1973) |
| C. Redshaw    | (June 1972–July 1973)        |
| J. Bell       | (November 1972–July 1973)    |

I owe all of these people, individually and collectively, a great debt, made all the greater by the fact that I was a part-time Director, more often to be found in Manchester than in Cambridge. During her period with the team Miss Yule was my deputy. After her departure this role was filled unofficially by Mr. Malfroy. It would, I think, be wrong of me here to attempt to attribute any specific pieces of work to individuals.

Also employed in the Cambridge offices in Hobson Street, were Miss Jennifer Tingle, who was the efficient secretary, and several occasional clerical and other assistants of whom I think Mrs. Louise Davie and Mrs. Judy Randall should be named as having become part of the team.

In Manchester several individuals have to be thanked, including all of those colleagues and friends who so ungrudgingly suffered from the consequences of my frequent absences and preoccupation with Cambridge. I must also thank Mr. D. J. Newman of the Department of Town and Country Planning in Manchester University, for his invaluable help with so much computer work, and Mr. A. L. Traill of the same Department for so much help with statistical work.



Finally I must record my unspeakable debt to my secretary Mrs. Margaret Barrow, who should have resigned many times, but mercifully did not.

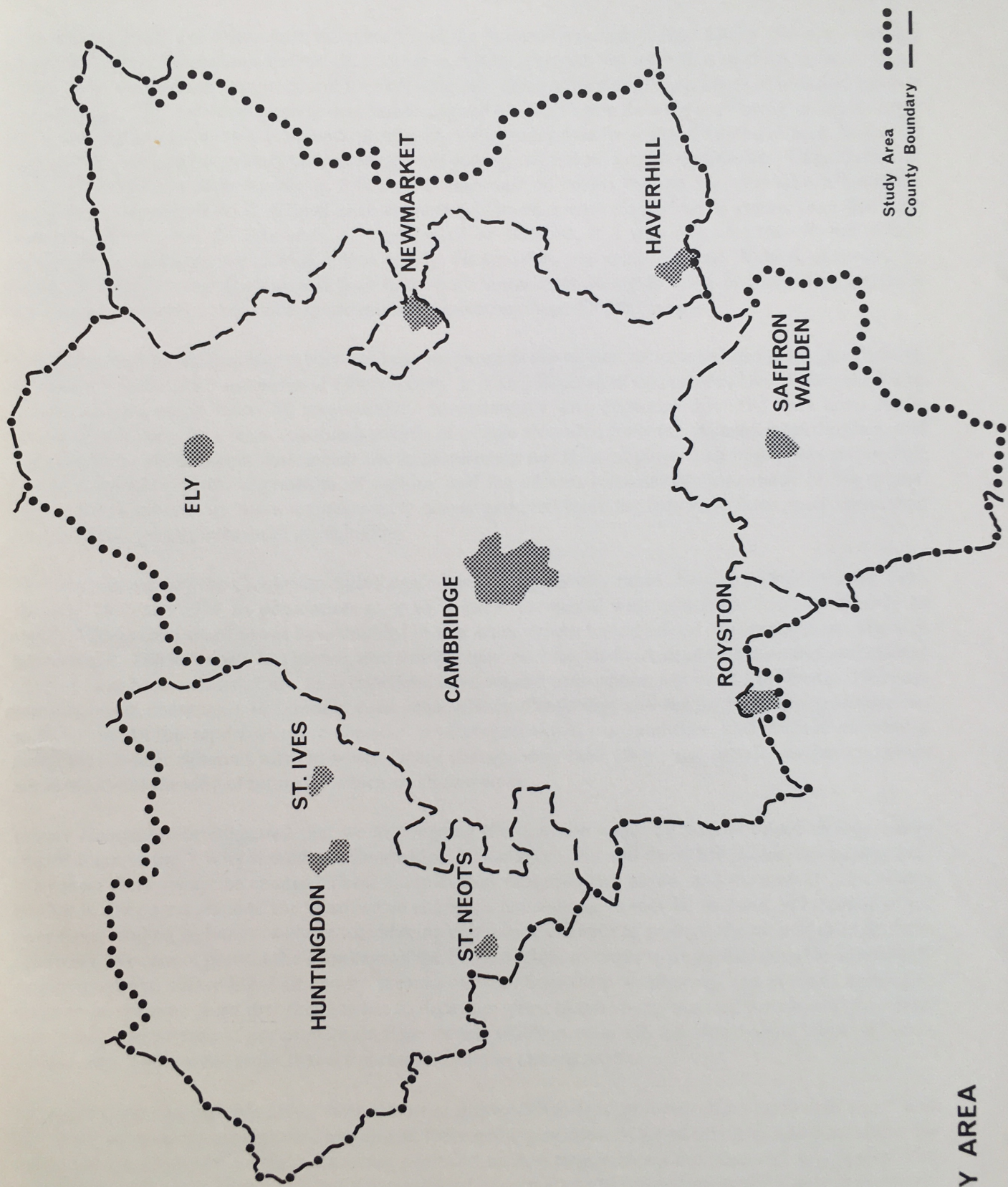
At a different level I have to record my gratitude to the Editor and Staff of the *Cambridge Evening News*. Local papers so often come in for criticism when they use what news they have and sometimes get things wrong. In the whole of this study the *Cambridge Evening News* was always willing not only to help us by publicising our surveys, but also in reporting our work to give us the benefit of the doubt, to be patient with us, and to show a degree of responsibility that I feel compelled to acknowledge.

J. Parry Lewis,

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Towns in the Department of Town and  
Country Planning, and Director of the  
Centre for Urban and Regional Research,  
in the University of Manchester.

22nd August 1973.





STUDY AREA



### INTRODUCTION

This report is about the recent past, the present and the future of a corner of East Anglia. No neat assembly of administrative boundaries defines this corner precisely. Instead, we have had to think of it in looser terms, as an area whose natural centre for shopping, administration and certain kinds of jobs and services is Cambridge. The statistical analysis has had to depend on population data for a collection of administrative areas approximating to this hinterland, and on employment data for a slightly different area. In neither case can the statistical boundary be looked upon as having any official or real significance. The influence of Cambridge does not stop sharply at a line on a map, nor do events beyond that line leave Cambridge unaffected: but there is an ill-defined area where the interaction with Cambridge is greater than that with Peterborough or Bury St. Edmunds, or Chelmsford or Bedford. It is with this area that we are mainly concerned. It embraces the market towns of Ely, Newmarket, Haverhill, Saffron Walden, Royston, St. Neots, Huntingdon and St. Ives, and their immediate hinterlands. Roughly thirty or forty miles across, it covers approximately a thousand square miles and contains about 400,000 people.

It must be emphasised that this report has been prepared at the request of national and local governments but that it is in no way a statement of official policy. It is an independent and personal report for which one person, and one alone, takes full responsibility. In writing it I have depended upon the work done over a period of two years by a team consisting mainly of people seconded from the sponsoring authorities, and working under my direction: but neither the team members nor their employers are in any way responsible for, or committed to, the expressions of opinion and the various recommendations made in this report. This is not to say that the team members have simply gathered facts, for they have done much more than that, and have greatly influenced my thinking.

The area that we call the Cambridge Sub-Region has undergone very rapid changes, especially since 1945. Between 1951 and 1971 its population grew by a third, compared with a national increase of only an eighth. Villages and small towns have doubled in size, while others have declined. Its employment structure has changed. The university has grown, and tourists have become much more in evidence. Bus and railway services have been reduced. Cars, as everywhere, have created both opportunities and problems. There are pressures from commuters to London. Like other places, Cambridge and the surrounding towns are not as they were. In this report we try to consider in what ways this is true, and then, and much more importantly, we consider different ways in which future changes may take place; and certain recommendations are made about the kind of future for which we should work.

It may reasonably be suggested that we are begging the question when we talk of future changes. Why should there be any? Why should not Cambridge, Newmarket, Ely and the other places stay as they are? Why must there always be change? These are questions that are often asked, and the answer must always be that in the purest sense of the word, some change is natural and cannot be avoided. We cannot stop a river from eroding its banks, without introducing man-made changes to prevent the natural changes from occurring. We cannot prevent the shrinkage of the Fens, or close our eyes to its implications for agricultural employment and village life. Nor can we prevent our buildings from weathering, and at times needing so much to be spent on them that they are left to decay; or prevent the young married people who now form such a large proportion of our population from having children, who will one day require jobs and homes of their own. These are changes that are part of life, and as natural as life.

There are other changes that are by now almost as unavoidable. During recent years various tracts of land have been set aside by the planning authorities for specific purposes. Some of this land has been zoned for residential development, which means that, provided certain requirements are observed, any person who wishes to build houses upon it and has the consent of its owner can be refused permission only in extremely rare circumstances, and then possibly at great cost. In some cases building permission has already been given. In other words, there are many housing developments which may or may not take place but to



which the planning authority is already committed to consent. If all of these commitments are taken up, there will be enough new houses to accommodate an increase of about a third in the sub-region's population; and this increase could well occur during the next ten years, or even within this decade. It is true that by being slow to provide roads or drains a planning authority may make some of this development so unattractive that it becomes unlikely: but there is a limit to the extent to which an authority can get away with that sort of tactic, even if it wishes to do so. The fact is that decisions already taken now permit about another 120,000 or so people to settle in new houses somewhere in the sub-region. Without any immigration into the sub-region, we can expect its population to grow by about 20,000 between 1971 and 1981, and by a further 18,000 during the next ten years. This is natural change. If committed developments are fully taken up there will need to be an immigration in this decade of about 100,000; and there is nothing we can do to prevent this from occurring. This, of course, is not to say that such growth will occur. It would imply a rate of migration into the sub-region of about double that witnessed in the sixties. But all the signs point in this direction. Our sub-region is one of the fastest growing areas in England. We could, of course, make such growth less likely to occur by halting some of the road building schemes and the electrification of railways. In this way we would help to ensure that the sub-region does not become even more attractive than now to workers or employers who have links in London, but even then we would have to admit that in the last two decades, and especially in the sixties, the sub-region has grown very rapidly without these proposed improvements.

We have talked so far of changes in population, but these are not the only changes that are inevitable. Economic activity in the sub-region, from agriculture to electronics, depends very much on what happens outside it; and if there are changes in demands for our products, or in the prices that we have to pay for our supplies, we may need to introduce some changes of our own in order to cushion the effects of these if we resent them, or to take advantage of them if we do not. There are also technological changes. Even without the help of Cambridge firms, there would by now have been television, which has altered the leisure patterns of the sub-region, bringing pleasure to many who are house-bound as well as causing declines in cinema attendances and community recreations. It has also had its impact on the high streets of our area, with television sales and rental shops helping to give them a new character, just as self-service stores and supermarkets, and the changing interest in clothes, especially by younger people, have done. These are changes that no area can resist. In a different sense of the word, these, too, are natural changes.

It would, however, be quite wrong to suppose that every change that we have witnessed has been inevitable just as it would be wrong to feel that change is necessarily bad. The demolition of an historic building is rarely inevitable, even though it may be considered by some to be advantageous and by others to be too costly to prevent. At the same time, the replacement of undistinguished insanitary terraces by undistinguished modern town houses, although possibly portraying a lost opportunity is probably on balance an improvement. If we accept that some change is inevitable, and that some may even be desirable, the important task before us is to consider not only what changes to resist, and how to resist them, but also what changes we can encourage, and how we can use the inevitable to our advantage. The Cambridge Sub-Region is under a number of economic, political, social, technological and natural pressures. Left to themselves these will produce changes, some desirable, some undesirable. In this report we consider what some of them are likely to be, and how these pressures can be altered and redirected, so that in the next fifteen or twenty years the sub-region not only changes for the better, but also in a way that will help to ensure that even afterwards these changes that are natural and inevitable are, where possible, more beneficial than injurious.

When the Cambridge Sub-Region Study Team began its work we tried to do so in an open-minded way. It would have been easy to say that such and such a method should be used, that the newest planning techniques were obviously appropriate, and that the problems to be solved were those that had been listed for us by various people. But we did none of these things. Instead we devoted the first of our two years to studying the sub-region. Some of the team already knew it well, but others, including myself, had negligible knowledge of it. I decided that before we could make recommendations about its future, or even before we could decide upon how to reach these recommendations, we all needed to know more about the sub-region, and especially about how its various activities affected each other, and how they were related to events beyond its boundaries. We needed to learn about changes in the sub-region, and about the nature

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of the forces that had brought about those changes. We also needed to consider what changes the future would inevitably bring, and whether there were some changes that should be fostered.

We set about this study in several different ways. Various statistical reports and other papers were studied. Several organisations and individuals were approached for views and information. Meetings were held in Cambridge and most of the market towns to which representatives of local interest were invited, and where they expressed their views. To obtain better information about certain matters on which we were clearly ill-informed, we also conducted some special surveys of tourism, car parking, shopping and industrial activity. In all of these we were helped tremendously by the local press, and especially by the *Cambridge Evening News* which has, throughout the study, consistently demonstrated its willingness to help us. It is equally true that, with very few exceptions, the industrialists, the officials, and the ordinary villagers and townsmen have helped us to the best of their abilities, and shown us a very encouraging degree of goodwill. At the end of our first year of study I felt that I knew something about the sub-region, but that also I was beginning to identify myself with it, and to belong to it, in a way that would not have been possible if people had been less willing to help.

Our period of study did not end after one year. Even in the last days of our existence we continue to learn. But after one year we had to pull our facts and expressions of views together. In Part Two of this report there are lengthy descriptions and analyses of the various market towns and their hinterlands, and of certain topics such as agriculture, employment, housing, population, conservation and other matters. In writing these chapters, and in discussing them, we identified many problems that needed to be tackled, and many possibilities that seemed worthy of exploration.

The next step was to set about devising alternative strategies for the sub-region, to consider their advantages and disadvantages, and to choose one of them for recommendation to the authorities. This involved a great deal of work which is described in Part Two. We often felt that we needed more time, but we were also aware of the urgency of our task, and we have looked upon this as the overriding consideration. If we had had more time we would have been able to look at some things in more detail, and to develop certain arguments more thoroughly, but we would also have been postponing publication of what we have already achieved. If I had felt for one moment that delay of this kind was warranted I would have sought permission to extend our study; but I am convinced that even after another year or two of further study we would have emerged with essentially the same recommendations. The important point is that, although they would then have had an even stronger argument than now to support them, the changes that would meanwhile be occurring would have made it more difficult to implement them. Towns do not stand still while awaiting the judgement of men.

What now appears, in Part One, is based on this very detailed work. Ideally the two parts should appear together, but unfortunately that would mean postponing publication for some months. In the belief that my major findings and recommendations should be made public as soon as possible, with an adequate indication of the reasoning behind them, this Part One of the report is being published separately at the earliest possible date.



### THE DOMINATION OF CAMBRIDGE

The sub-region is dominated by Cambridge, but it is perhaps true to say that to an even greater degree Cambridge is dominated by the sub-region. In order to examine this proposition we must look at the changing population and economic activity of the last twenty years.

The sub-region is not densely populated. It is still essentially an agricultural area with a ring of market towns and scattered villages centred on a university town that also has important market functions. The three principal changes have been a rapid growth in population, a shift away from agriculture towards manufacturing, and a much greater use of private transport to a degree that has led to a decline in the provision of public transport.

In 1951 the population was distributed in much the same way as now, with a concentration in Cambridge and the market towns; but subsequent growth has been uneven. Haverhill, Huntingdon and St. Neots have expanded very rapidly under Town Development Act schemes. Policy has encouraged the growth of selected villages in the County of Cambridgeshire, but restrained the growth of Cambridge itself. In the north-east, around Ely and Chatteris, population levels have been barely maintained as a drift of labour away from these areas has almost balanced the natural increase. The principal differences between 1951 and 1971 are shown in Maps 1 and 2 (a and b), whilst Map 3 (see pages 6, 7, 8 and 9), based on a map drawn by the Cambridgeshire County Council Planning Department, shows in a different way the scale of change between 1956 and 1966, and emphasises how the greatest growth, of over 30% in a period of ten years, took place in three tongues pointing southwards from a common origin in Cambridge.

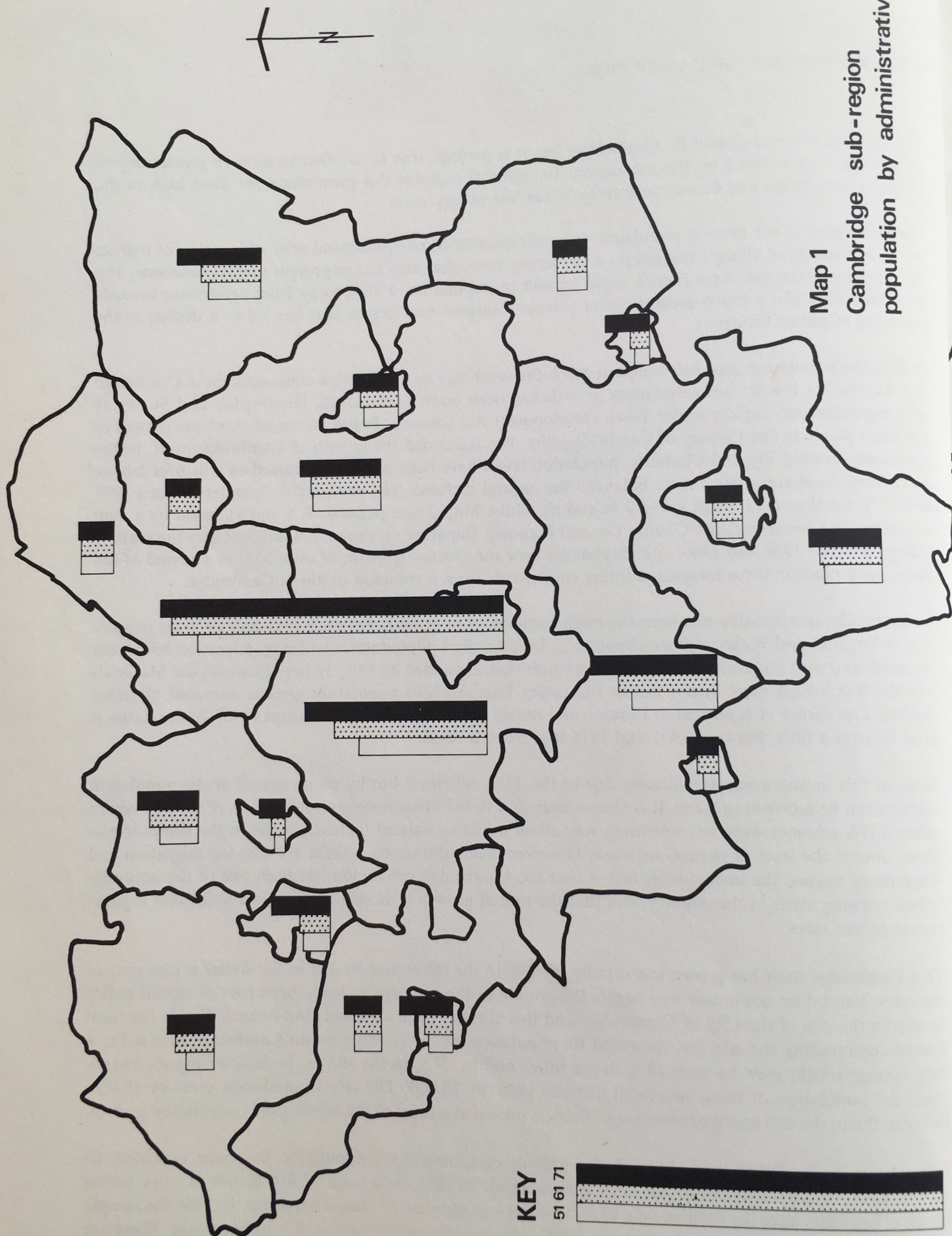
Undoubtedly, immigration has been the main component of growth. Between 1951 and 1971 the population of England and Wales grew by about 12%. East Anglia's population, swollen by migration both from the north and west and from London and the south-east, expanded by 22%. In the fifties only the Midlands and the South-East grew faster, but in the sixties East Anglia's population growth outpaced all other regions. The corner of it nearest to London and routes to the Midlands grew fastest of all. In the sixties it grew by over a fifth. Between 1951 and 1971 it grew by a third.

Some of this immigration was directly due to the TDA schemes: but by no means all of the population increase can be ascribed to these. It is shown later that in the fifties immigration to parts of the sub-region where TDA schemes were not operating was about equal to natural increase, while in the sixties it was about double the level of natural increase. However much allowance is made for assisted migration and compulsory moves, the unassailable fact is that the Cambridge sub-region has been one of the naturally fastest growing areas in the country, and that the rate of growth is increasing. This is a point that is paramount to our story.

That Cambridge itself has grown less rapidly, by 8% in the fifties and by 3% in the sixties is also part of the story, but it does not in any way negate the growth of the sub-region. It has been part of official policy to restrict the size of the City of Cambridge, and this aim has been achieved: but in each decade the rural district surrounding the city has increased its population by 20%, while South Cambridgeshire R.D., a little further south, grew by over 18% in the fifties and by 27% in the sixties. In fact, during the twenty years the population of these two rural districts grew by 28,000. The city's population grew by 10,000. Between them, the city and these two rural districts provided a third of the sub-region's population growth.

It must not be forgotten that although the growth of Cambridge's population has been curtailed, its growth as an employment centre has been very marked. In 1951 there were 42,410 people at work within the city. Ten years later the number was 10,000 greater—an increase of almost a quarter. In 1966 the sample census recorded a further growth of about 3,000 jobs—an increase of almost 6% in five years. These are

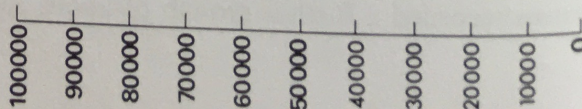
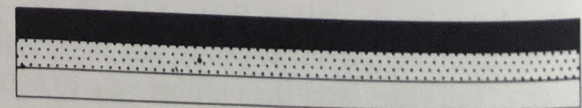




Map 1  
Cambridge sub-region  
population by administrative ar

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# KEY

No. of persons

5000

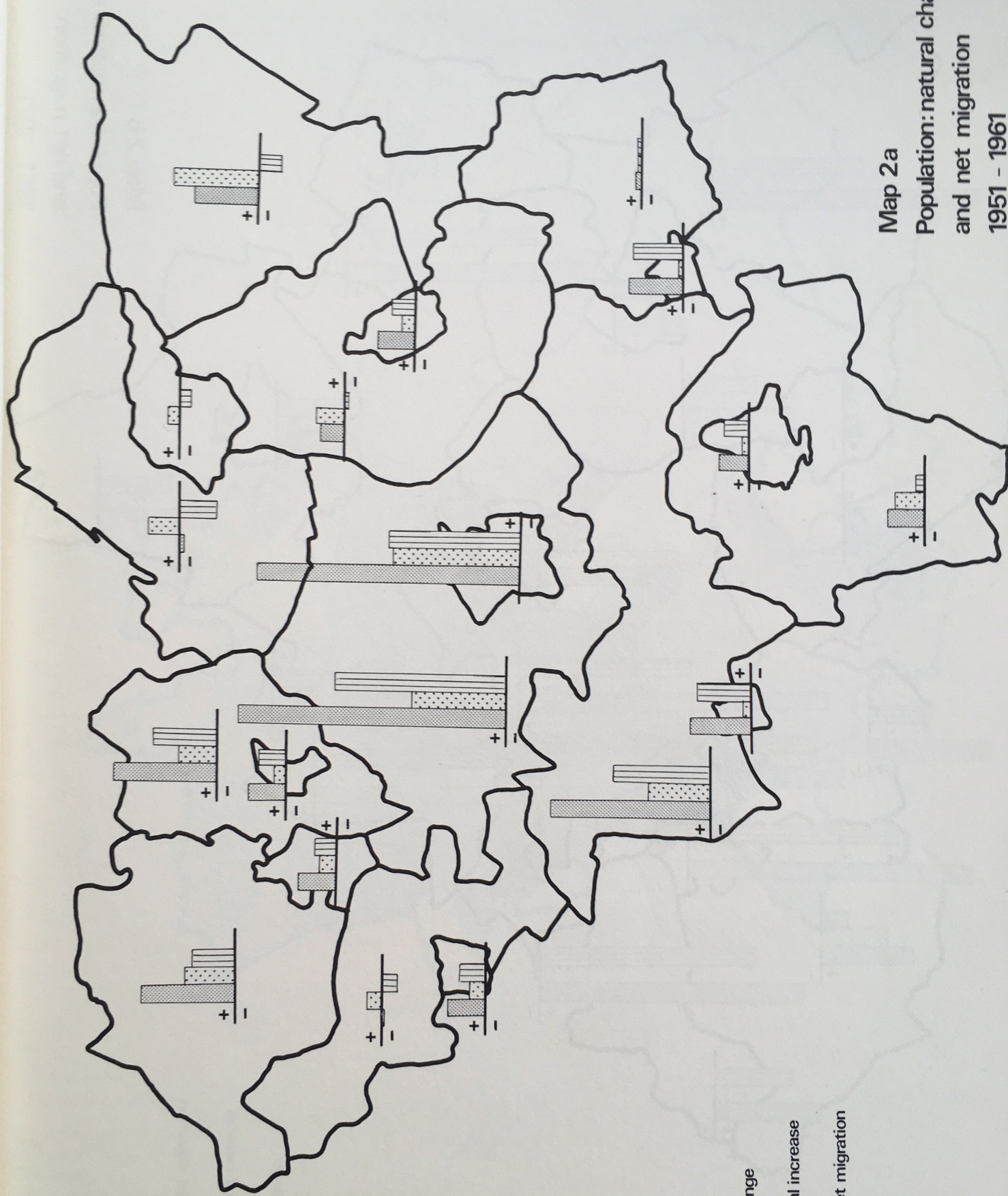
2500

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Total change

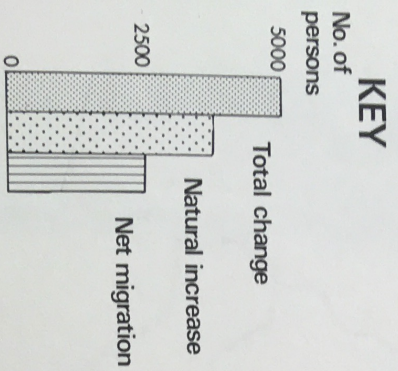
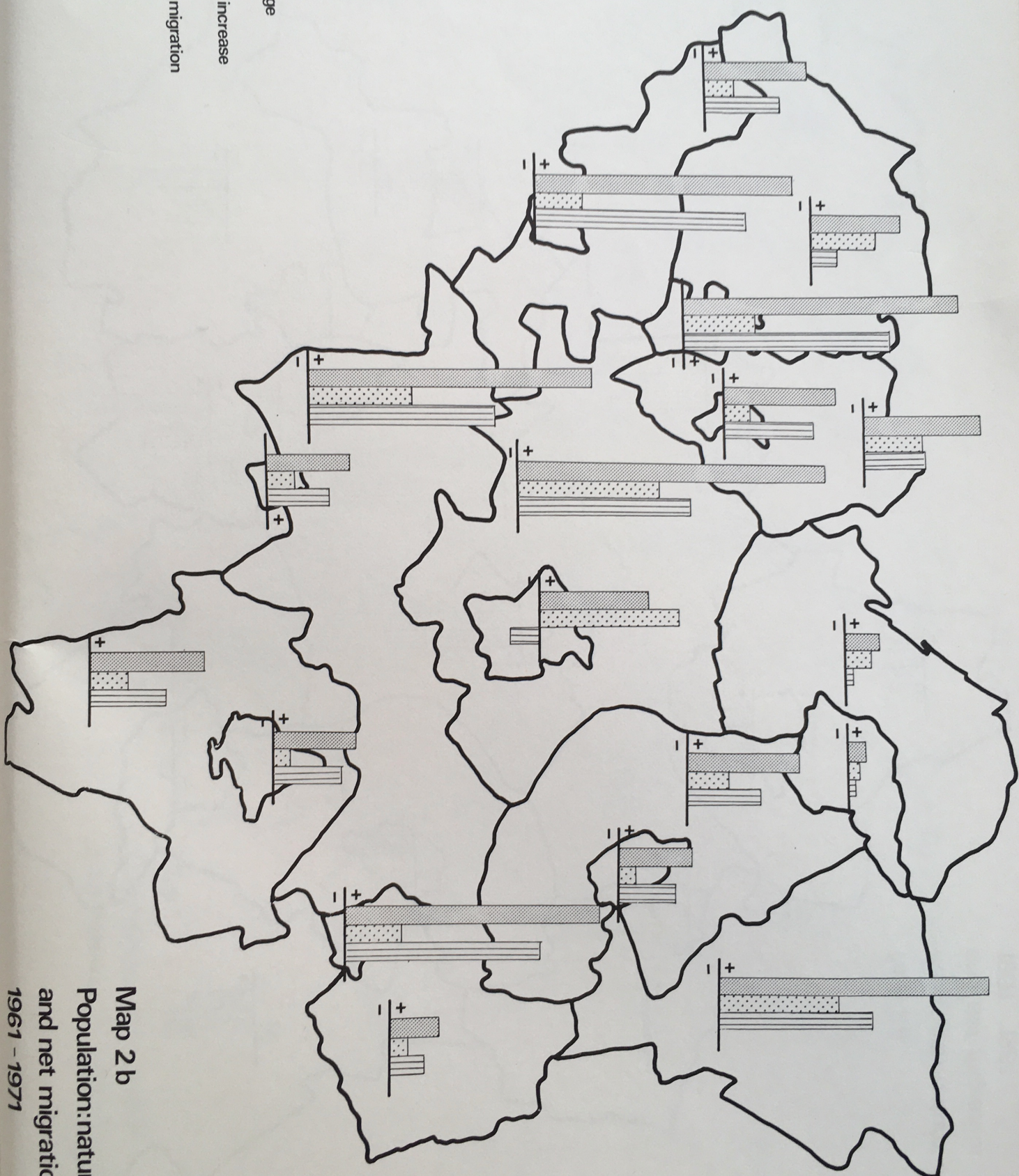
Natural increase

Net migration



Map 2a  
Population: natural change  
and net migration  
1951 - 1961

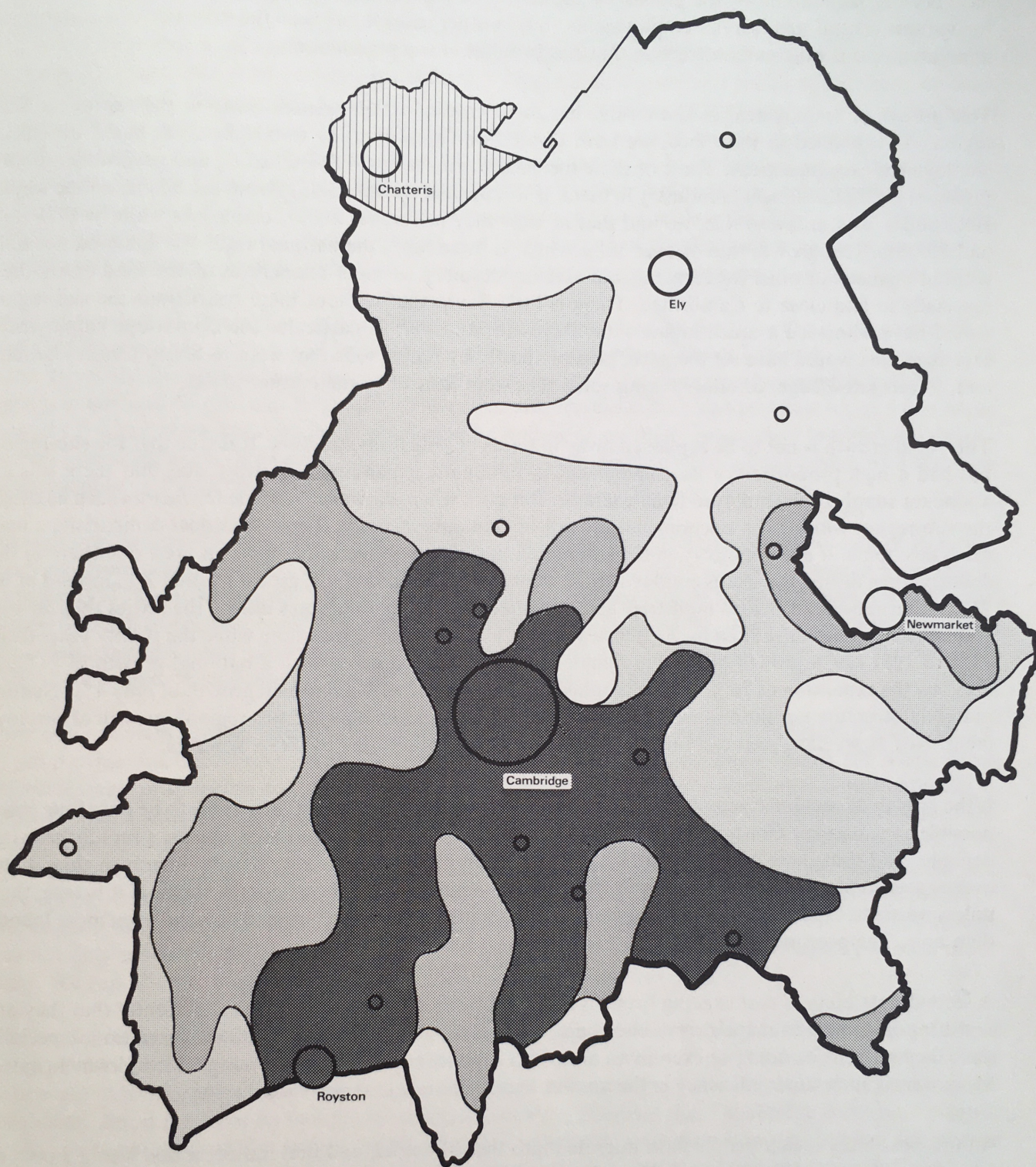




**Map 2 b**

**Population: natural change and net migration 1961 - 1971**





KEY:

- Major towns.
- Other principal settlements.

Areas of population change 1956-1966:

- : over 30% increase.
- : 15-30% increase.
- : 5-15% increase.
- : less than 5% increase.
- ▨ : decrease.

Map3

Areas of population change 1956-1966



figures relating strictly to jobs within the city: just outside it there was further growth. Many of these jobs have been brought about by the growth of population in the sub-region, which has engendered a demand for various central area service employments: but in other cases it has been the existence of a suitable job in an area that is inherently attractive that has brought in the population.

This growth of employment in Cambridge has to be considered alongside growth in the rest of the sub-region. As explained in Part Two, we have divided our area of study into eight areas based on official employment exchange areas. Three of these included towns having TDA schemes, and government policy favoured the establishment of industry in them. If we consider the remaining five areas, where, on the whole, IDC policy was unfavourable, we find that in 1951 they had about 80,000 employees while in 1971 they had 105,000. This growth rate of over 30%, which is three times the national rate, was achieved not only without financial or other inducements but actually despite a series of restrictions of one kind or another, especially in and close to Cambridge. There is little doubt that without these restrictions the sub-region would have witnessed a much higher rate of growth; and that in particular the Cambridge employment exchange area would have set the pace, possibly partly by taking jobs that went to South Cambridgeshire and, to our knowledge, certainly taking some that went instead to the market towns.

This rapid growth is not to be explained away in terms of industrial structure. It is true that the sub-region has had a high proportion of its employment in nationally expanding industries, and that there was an abundant supply of unemployed female labour. But even when allowance is made for factors such as these, the sub-region witnessed a phenomenal growth of economic activity. Three statistical comparisons may drive this home. If every industry in the sub-region had grown at the same rate as it grew elsewhere in the country, then during the sixties employment in the sub-region would have grown by only 2%, instead of by 21%. Alternatively, if British industries had grown at the sub-regional rates during the sixties then British employment would have risen by 20% instead of by 1%. Finally, we may note while the twenty years from 1951 to 1971 saw a growth of 60% in female employment, compared with a national growth of 21%, it also saw the expansion of 26% in male employment, compared with a national growth of only 4%. Neither industrial structure nor the existence of unemployed women can explain the sub-region's growth of employment. Nor as we have seen can the encouragement given to industry by TDA schemes.

If the growth of economic activity cannot be explained in these terms then there seems to be only four other possible explanations. One is that individual firms are producing goods for which there is a rapidly growing demand, and that these are over-represented in the sub-region. There may be some truth in this, if the over-representation is within the various industrial categories rather than between them. If it is true, then unless we are to experience severe changes in tastes we must expect these firms to demand even more labour than now. The pressure continues.

A second possibility is that existing firms in the Cambridge area are producing so efficiently that they are capturing customers from their rivals elsewhere. If this is so, we cannot expect a sudden cessation, especially since they seem to be doing so even in an area with significantly lower than average unemployment rates. Moreover, if such super-efficiency is the answer then there is a case for encouraging it.

A third possibility is that people have migrated into the sub-region and that industrialists, seeing a pool of unemployed labour, have followed them. This is so blatantly at variance with the unemployment statistics that we can ignore it.

The only remaining possibility seems to be that for one reason or another employers have looked upon the sub-region as a favourable location for expansion. The very name 'Cambridge' is an attraction to some. Indeed, a director of one firm with whom we have corresponded became quite annoyed when we indicated that for statistical purposes his firm had to be described as being in the Royston area rather than in the Cambridge area. Any electrical or instrument engineering firm, or one in any field with some air of science or erudition, able to boast of a Cambridge connection is almost as favoured as Welsh whisky would be disfavoured—as much out of prejudice as out of impartial assessment. Add to this the important factor of accessibility to London, the Midlands and the North, which road schemes are constantly improving, and



the general aesthetic appeal of the towns and the countryside, and reasons for settling in the sub-region become almost overwhelming for some.

Yet it is Cambridge itself that exerts the pull, and its dependence on places outside its boundaries is growing. The main statistical evidence is confused by factors mentioned in Part Two, but taken on their face value the main data suggest that in 1951 about 81 % of the jobs in Cambridge were occupied by its citizens, while in 1961 it was only 73 %, and in 1966 it was as low as 69 %. Despite the inaccuracies in these figures, there is a very definite downward trend, as is substantiated by a different set of data. In 1951 several areas outside Cambridge were identified as sources of labour for the city. Its total number of jobs in those days was about 42,000. Fifteen years later the number of jobs was about 55,000.<sup>1</sup> Except for Royston Urban District, every area identified in 1951 as providing a share of Cambridge's work force provided an even bigger percentage share in 1966, and it was, as we have seen, a bigger percentage of a bigger total.

Most of this labour commuting into the city came from places close by. In 1966 about one employee in eight lived outside the city but within about two miles of its boundary. About half as many again lived in what are called the second ring villages, such as Comberton, Cottenham, Sawston and Bottisham. One person in ten lived further out. Some idea of the 1966 distribution is provided by Maps 4 and 5 (see pages 12 and 13) which show not only the dependence of Cambridge on these outer areas but also the dependence of these places on Cambridge as a centre of employment. In both cases, all the evidence points to an intensification of this dependence.

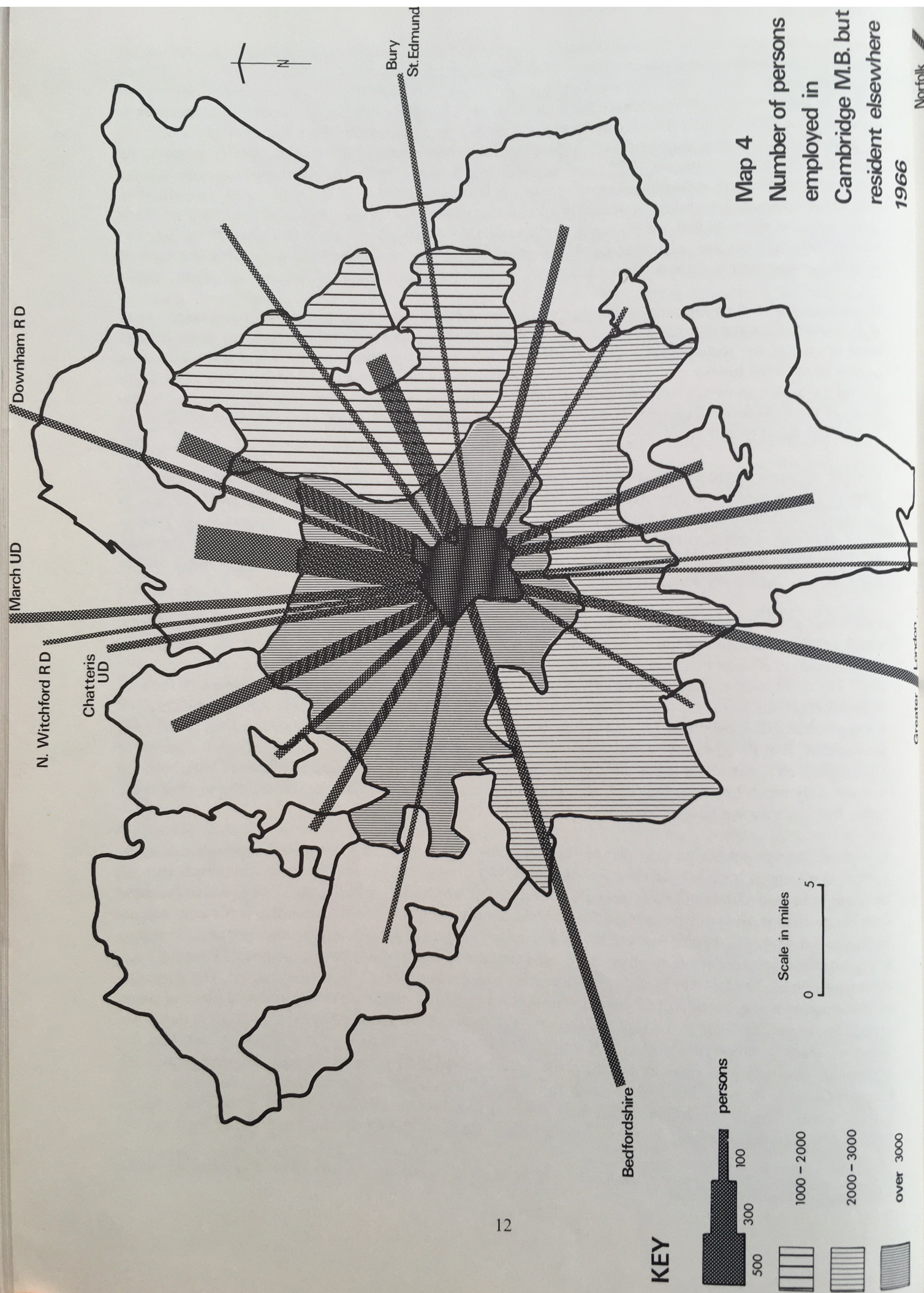
It is not only journey-to-work that defines a dependence. Cambridge attracts many thousands of shoppers every day from places scattered over a very wide area. According to street surveys conducted by us late in October 1971, about half of the shoppers in the historic centre and half of those shopping in the Fitzroy Street-Burleigh Street area came from outside the city. During the summer, when tourists swell the total, the dependence of the city's shops on trade from outside is even more apparent, but the point that I wish to make here is their dependence on people living elsewhere in the sub-region.

Two other sources provide useful information about this. One is the Cambridge Transportation Study, which provides the information on which we have based Maps 6 and 7 (see pages 14 and 15). These show the percentages of shopping done in the 'home zone' and in Cambridge on a weekday and on a Saturday in 1967. The other source is a household survey conducted by us in twenty-two different settlements in the sub-region. This information is presented in Maps 8, 9 and 10 (see pages 16, 17 and 18) which show not only the dependence of these places on Cambridge but also their dependence on other places. Thus we can see, for example, that Peterborough attracts about 70 % as much custom as does Cambridge from the people of Huntingdon so far as major items are concerned, but that for minor purchases the share of Peterborough was not only much less than that of Cambridge but was smaller even than the share going to mail order firms. We can also see how different was the story for the residents of St. Ives.

It is possible to go on in this way, elaborating for many pages upon the sub-regional importance of Cambridge. Data about hospital patients, technical college students, origins of parked cars and much else can be brought to bear. Some of this evidence is considered in more detail in Part Two. It all points to the same conclusion. But it must not be thought from this assembly of evidence that Cambridge is the only magnet in the sub-region. All of the market towns are minor magnets, providing jobs and services for people living both inside and outside their boundaries. There are also important counter magnets. Bedford has a strong pull on St. Neots. Bury St. Edmunds attracts shoppers and workers from Newmarket. The attraction of Peterborough is growing; and London is important both as a shopping centre and as a place of work, especially for people living in the south of the sub-region. All of this is discussed in some detail in Part Two. What we want to emphasise now is that despite the slow growth of its own population, Cambridge has become increasingly important as a work place and a service centre for a very rapidly growing population that lives outside its boundaries, much of it in villages in the county of Cambridgeshire, but some of it in market towns lying further afield. These market towns form a ring; and however strong the pull of places outside this ring may become, however Peterborough, Bedford and Chelmsford may grow, these market

1. The comparison between 42,000 and 55,000 has to be treated cautiously for reasons given in Part Two. What matters here is that there was a very appreciable increase.







Greater London  
Harlow  
Bishop's Stortford U.D.

Norfolk

West Suffolk

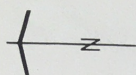
Essex

Greater London

Herts.

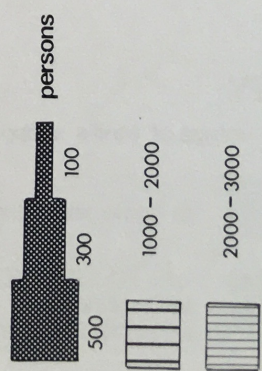
Stevenage

Other parts of the  
United Kingdom

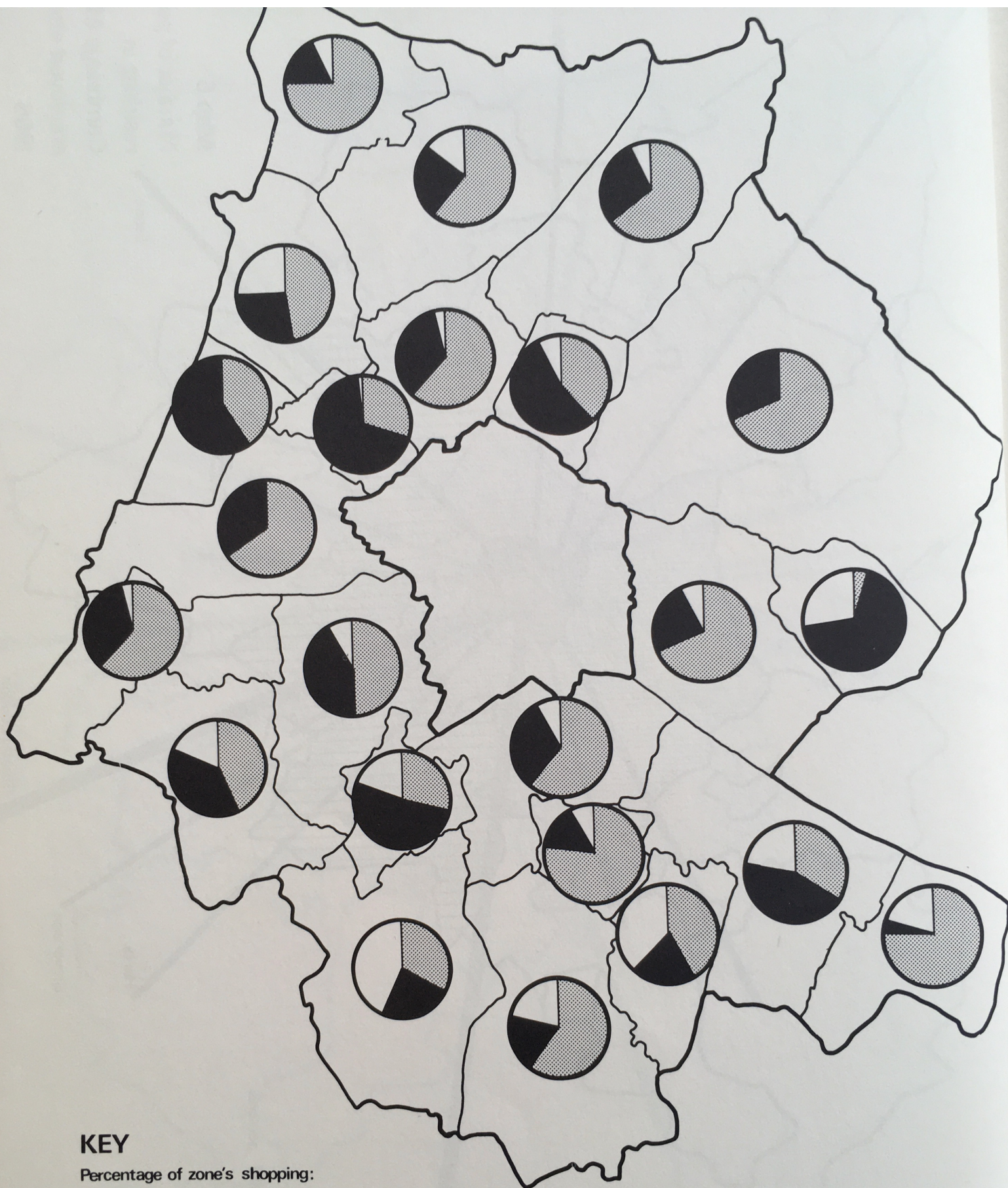


**Map 5**  
Number of persons  
resident in  
Cambridge M.B. but  
employed elsewhere  
1966

**KEY**







# KEY

Percentage of zone's shopping:



In home zone



In Cambridge

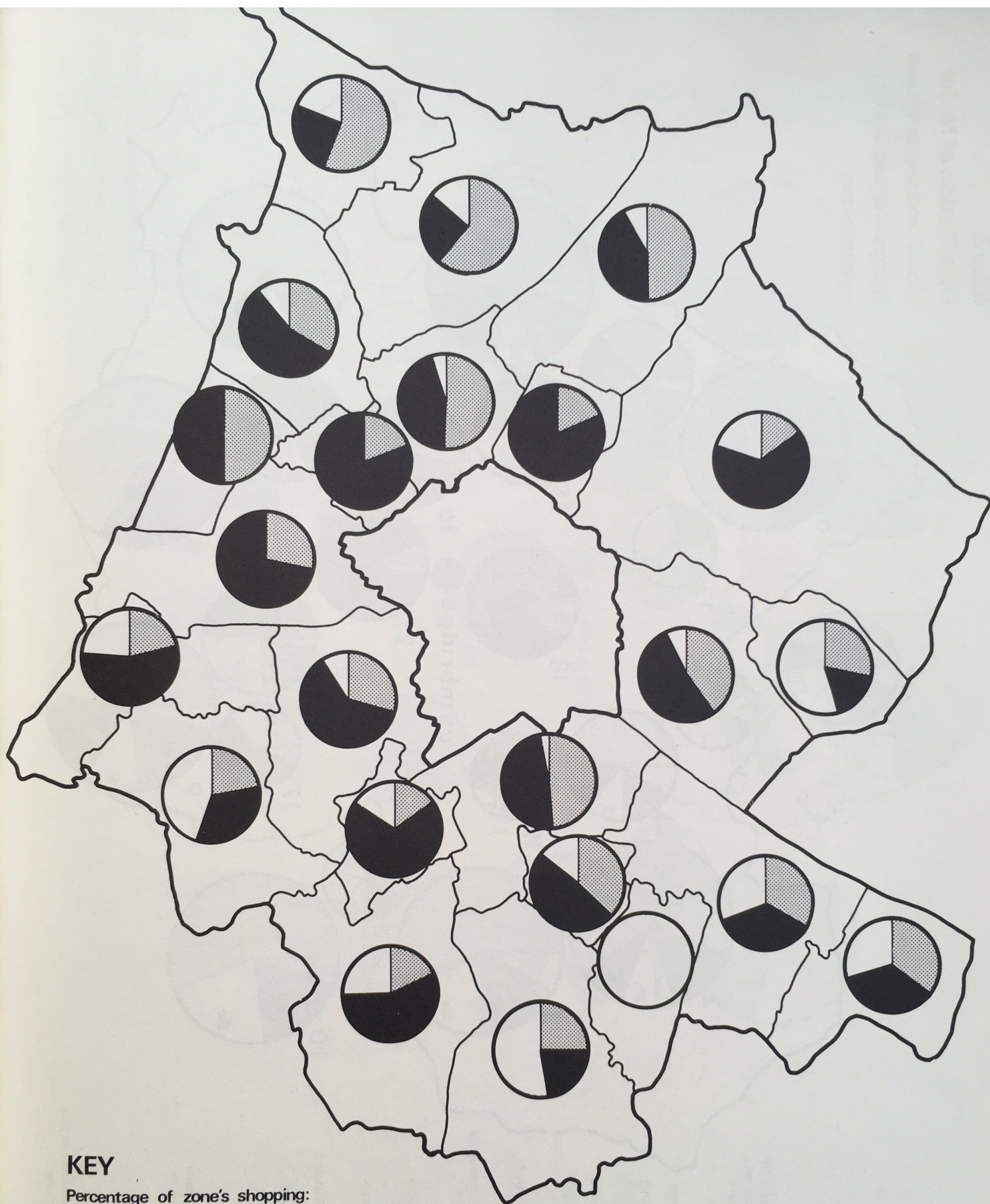


Elsewhere

Map 6

Distribution of weekday shopping from around Cambridge





# **KEY**

Percentage of zone's shopping:



In home zone



In Cambridge



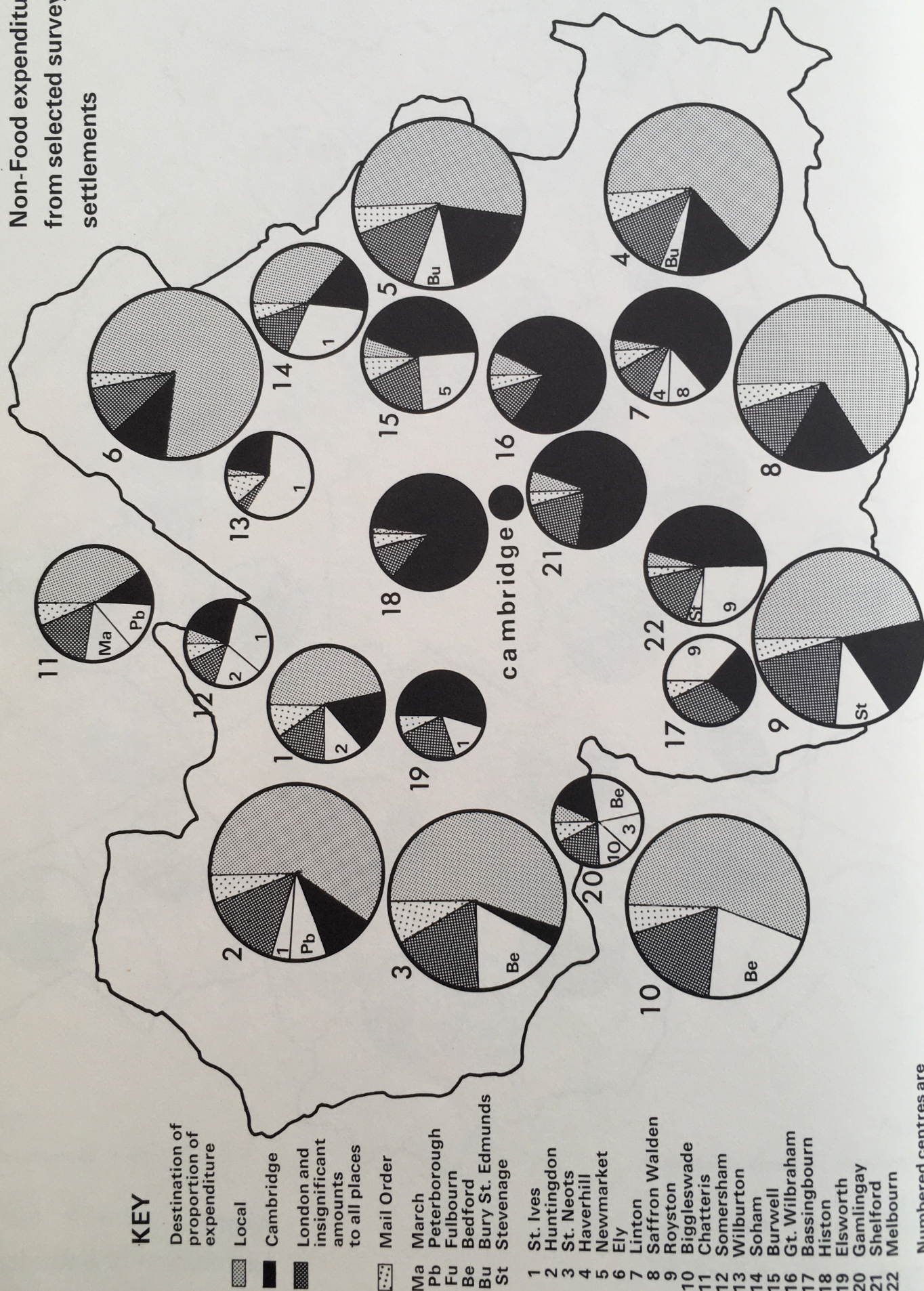
Elsewhere

## **Map 7**

**Distribution of Saturday shopping from around Cambridge**



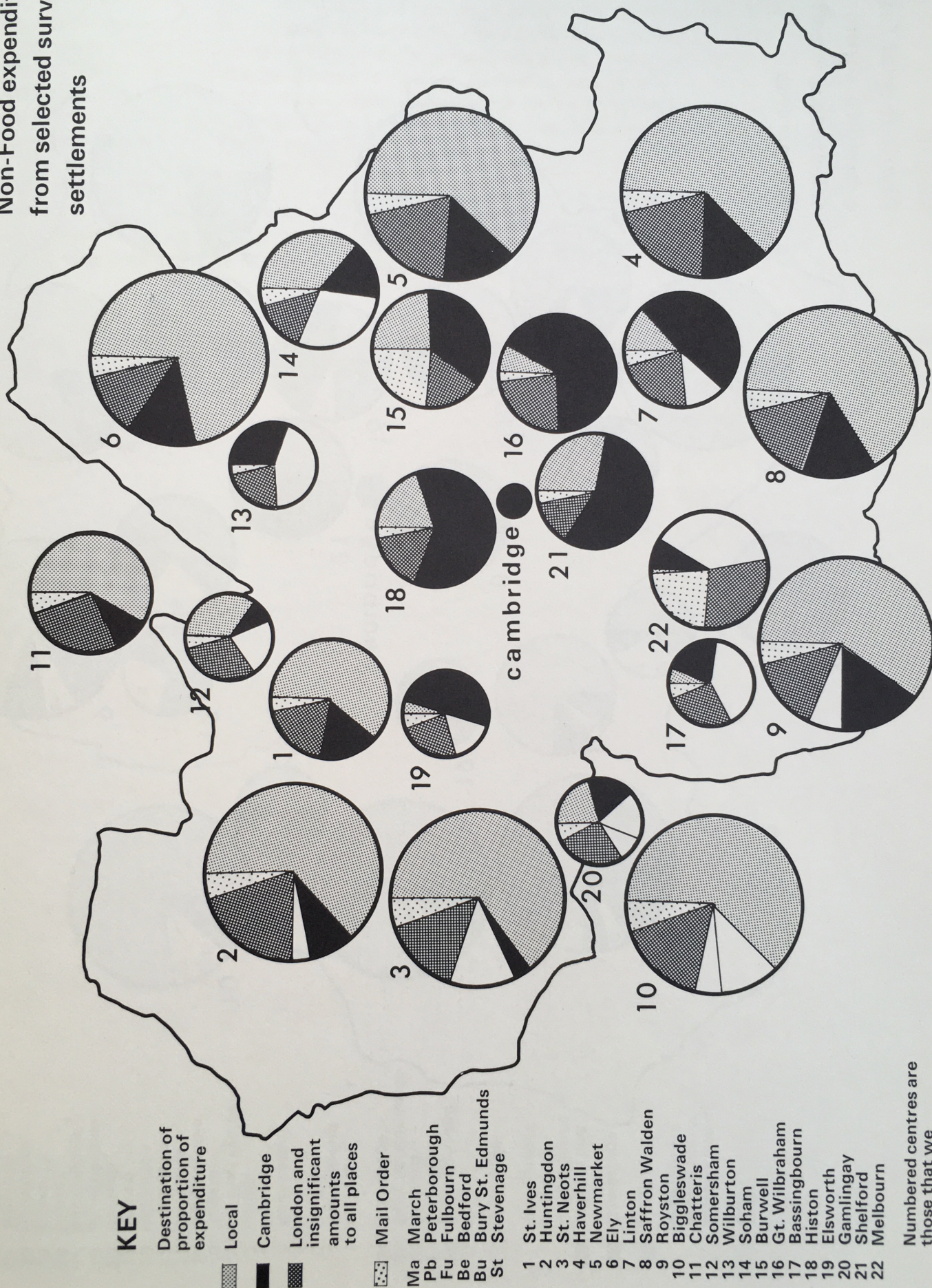
# Distribution of Major Non-Food expenditure from selected surveyed settlements





Map 9

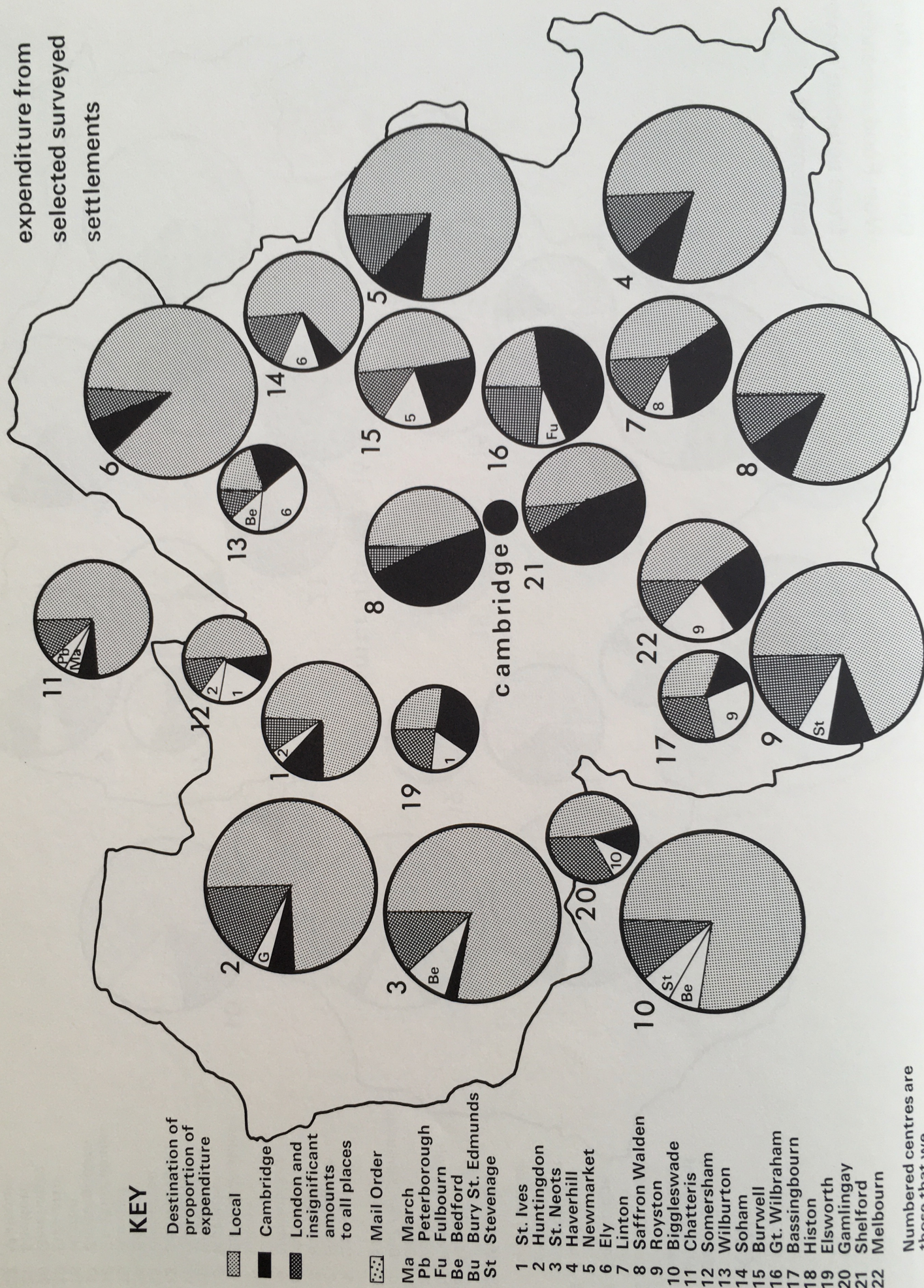
Distribution of Minor  
Non-Food expenditure  
from selected surveyed  
settlements





# Map 10

Distribution of Total  
expenditure from  
selected surveyed  
settlements





towns will always impress themselves upon the town that lies at the centre of that ring. Any student of urban structure will recognise this as an almost perfect example of central place theory. Cambridge is the natural centre for this ring of small towns, and as they and the villages grow so every natural force of social and economic behaviour presses for the growth of Cambridge. Since 1950, these pressures have been resisted: yet employment in manufacturing industry and the services has grown, and grown faster than local population. The shopping centre has become increasingly congested, both by cars and by people. Controversy about the size of the city and the location and scale of further shopping facilities has coloured almost every discussion of Cambridge; and redevelopment has proceeded at a pace that some deem to be too slow but that others consider to border on vandalism.

The sub-region has many problems, and the solution of some of them is both difficult and important. We consider them later, not out of any attempt to reduce them in importance, but because there is one problem whose solution is central to theirs. It arises from questions about the future of Cambridge itself. To appreciate their importance we have to look at its past.



## LION YARD AND FITZROY-BURLEIGH

If we are to understand what has happened in Cambridge, and to learn a lesson that is applicable also to other towns, we must venture into history. The past arouses even more controversy than the future, and it would be too much to hope that any brief account of events leading up to and following from the Holford Report of 1950 may be accepted as accurate and balanced by all who read it: but I hope that what follows may at least be judged as being fair. Quite deliberately, I have said little about road schemes, because my purpose is to present not a history of planning decisions, but of some planning decisions, whose consequences are more far-reaching than has been appreciated. We should note at once that several of the recommendations of the Holford Report were not implemented, and that it was written when traffic and redevelopment pressures were less intense than now.

In 1946, Mr. Lewis Silkin, then Minister of Town and Country Planning, addressed a meeting in which he impressed upon his Cambridge audience the urgency of the need for policies governing the growth of industry and population in such a way that the city could best perform its function as a university town and a market centre. The City and the University of Cambridge jointly requested Professor Sir William Holford to review the position and to make proposals. In 1947 the Town and Country Planning Act transferred responsibility for the planning of Cambridge to the County Council, which then adopted the arrangements made with Professor Holford.

The Holford Report was published in 1950. High amongst its objectives was a desire to conserve, and to conserve not simply the historic centre of Cambridge but Cambridge as a university and market town. It was felt that any appreciable growth would destroy the character of the town. In view of this, it was recommended that there should be severe restriction of new industrial development as a means of reducing the pressure for growth. There were also various important road proposals. The report argued for a new shopping street ('New Guildhall Street'), and a multi-storey car park in the Lion Yard area; a new shopping development where we now have Bradwell's Court and the Prudential Building and, eventually, an extension of the shopping centre by redeveloping land at present occupied by housing immediately to the east of Emmanuel Road and north of Parker Street.

In 1952 the County Council submitted a statutory Development Plan, based on the Holford Report, to the Minister. It embodied the basic proposal that in order to keep Cambridge predominantly a university town the rate of growth of Cambridge should be reduced, and the population stabilised at about 100,000, by imposing severe restrictions on industrial development. At the same time, development dispersed over other parts of the country was to be encouraged.

Both the City and the University were amongst the objectors to this Development Plan. One of the University's objections was to the proposal to redevelop Lion Yard for commercial purposes and car parking. Writing of the pressures upon central Cambridge they argued, in their 1952 objection:

'It appears that the only solution is to attract traffic away from the centre by development of a new shopping area elsewhere, so that the present central area would become predominantly University and professional in character, with such smaller shops as are appropriate'.

They went on to suggest that the new shopping area should be in the 'New Square-Fitzroy Street neighbourhood'. The Public Inquiry at which this objection was heard lasted for six weeks. Mr. Henry Wells, appearing as an expert witness, claimed that there was substantial pressure for the expansion of the shopping area, and he gave evidence of demand from various multiples wishing to establish in Cambridge.

In 1954 the Minister approved the Development Plan with only minor modifications. In announcing his approval he expressed the hope that the general layout of a comprehensive development in Lion Yard would be prepared at an early date so that the erection of the car park would not be long delayed.



Another part of the County's plan was embodied in what was called 'Town Map No. 2' (see pages 23 and 24). This defined an area embracing eighteen villages in the immediate vicinity of Cambridge, and spelt out a policy, submitted to the Minister in 1955, that made provision for an increase in their combined population from about 19,000 to a total of about 26,000. It was approved with minor modifications in 1957, a couple of months after Ministerial approval had been given to the principle of a green belt around Cambridge.

Disagreements and difficulties of one kind or another delayed formal submission of proposals for Lion Yard until 1959, when there was another Public Inquiry. In August 1960 the Minister announced his decision not to approve the proposals as submitted. He had concluded that the Authorities had not made a case for the expansion of shopping in the area, and that there should be no increase in office space. He suggested that additional shopping space should be provided only if it could be shown that it was unlikely to lead to a significant increase in the total volume of shopping being done in the central area. He had doubts about the intensity of commercial development, and about the programming of the Lion Yard scheme of redevelopment as one continuous operation.

A few months later the University reiterated the view that there should be a new shopping development in the 'City Road Area'. The scheme put forward suggested that sixty-five acres, bounded by Newmarket Road, East Road, Parkside and Emmanuel Road, should be redeveloped to provide shops, a large car park and some high density residential development. Here was to be a new shopping centre, designed to become the principal centre, if necessary by using pressure of one kind or another to move to it some of the larger traders from the historic centre. It was put forward largely on the grounds of excessive traffic in the historic centre, and the inability of that centre to cope with the rapidly growing demand for regional shopping facilities.

The scale of this proposal of late 1960 is sometimes forgotten. It envisaged a 1,000,000 square feet of new shopping floor space, of which half would accommodate shops transferred from the historic centre. Car parking spaces for 10,000 cars were to be provided. It was expected that three-quarters of the turnover of the historic centre would be transferred to this new centre, which would generate about the same quantity of additional trade from its other shops. The old historic centre would become increasingly a location for tourist shops and specialist shops; and some of its shops would revert to other uses.

In February 1962 revised proposals for the redevelopment of Lion Yard were submitted to the Minister. These were broadly similar to those submitted in 1959 but contained amendments intended to meet the views expressed by the Minister in 1959. The total floor space to be used for shops and offices was reduced, and it was specified that the additional commercial space was to be available only to businesses already established in the centre of Cambridge.

An inquiry into the Town Map was held during the summer of 1962. It lasted from June 26th until August 9th, and was concerned mainly with the University's proposals, the Lion Yard scheme, and road proposals. During this inquiry it was stated that the University now suggested a much smaller shopping development in the City Road area, and did not propose any form of compulsory movement from the historic centre. One of the witnesses, Mr. Lionel March, stated that one reason for not supporting the limitation of population growth in Cambridge was that this new shopping scheme depended for its success on a considerable increase in population. Other witnesses of distinction argued that the historic centre was adequate to meet the needs of regional shopping, and contained all the facilities one would expect to find in a town the size of Cambridge. Provided that traders were permitted to rebuild and to improve their premises, the historic centre could continue to function successfully as a shopping centre, and its traders would not move voluntarily to the proposed new centre. A successful shopping centre, it was argued, needed the attraction of civic, cultural and entertainment buildings. Moreover, once more, but now from different witnesses, the proposed new centre would be successful only if there was a substantial increase in population in and close to Cambridge.

There were, of course, many other objections, but they are not pertinent to our present theme. One point that is pertinent was made by Mr. Megarry in his closing speech on behalf of the University. He explained





Map 11 Central Cambridge

KEY

- |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| A Lion Yard       | J Parkside        |
| B Emmanuel Road   | K Newmarket Road  |
| C Parker Street   | L River Cam       |
| D New Square      | M Bradwells Court |
| E Fitzroy Street  | N Rose Crescent   |
| F Burleigh Street | P Magdalen Bridge |
| G City Road       | Q King Street     |
| H East Road       |                   |

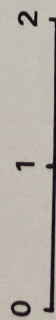
Scale: 0   $\frac{1}{4}$  mile



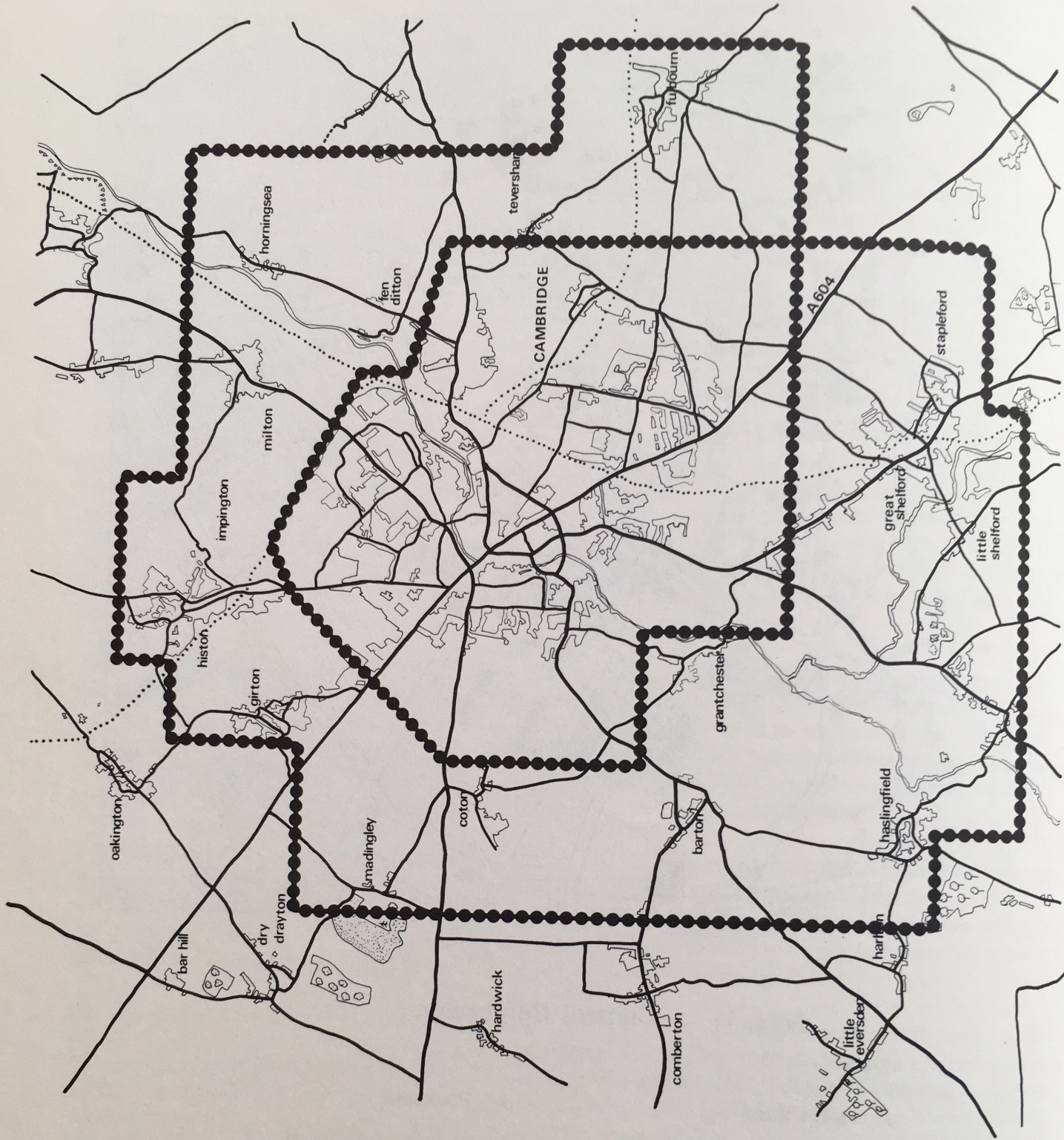
# Map 12 Town Map Number 2

## KEY

●●●●● Boundary of Town  
Map Number 2



Scale in miles





that his client had 'a real fear that commercial pressures would destroy the small scale market town character of the centre of Cambridge. If the County's policy was continued the small local shops would inevitably be displaced by high turnover shops and this could not effectively be resisted by planning control.'<sup>1</sup> It is an opinion to which we shall return.

Not long after the date of this Inquiry, there was another, in December 1963, to inquire into the proposal for a new village at Bar Hill. The proposal had been initiated by the County Council, and the City Council objected that since it was so close to the city it was bound to interact with it in various ways—yet the City Council had not even been consulted. The proposal was approved early in 1964, strengthening the feeling of the City Council that policy needed reviewing. The Town Clerk wrote a letter setting out a recommendation:

'that further investigations should be carried out so that consideration may be given to the desirability of some additional commercial and light industrial development being permitted now in the City in the interests of its citizens but without detriment to its amenities, notwithstanding that such development would result in the population exceeding 100,000'.

He pointed out that no planning policy is 'immutable for all time', that the rural areas of the County had grown at a much faster rate than had been anticipated, while the rate of growth of the City had slowed down and that it was not 'unreasonable for the City to wish for a fair share of the expanding economy in the interests of its citizens'. He went on to suggest that incomes of people working in commerce and industry in Cambridge were not as high as elsewhere, but that prices were high. The council was receiving inquiries from industry and commerce and from the Location of Offices Bureau. These could 'help to re-invigorate the prosperity of the City if a reasonable amount of light industry of an innocuous character and possibly additional offices could be introduced into the City'. After expressing concern 'at the prospect of being surrounded by a series of expanded villages and new villages of a suburban nature to the detriment of the countryside and adding to traffic problems in Cambridge and at the same time not contributing to the cost of meeting the problems' the Town Clerk went on to record the City Council's feeling 'that it may well not be beyond the technical capabilities of town planners and architects to plan a modest expansion of the City without detriment to its character and amenities'.

This was a strong plea. Briefly it said that there were industrial and commercial firms wanting to develop in Cambridge, that if they were permitted to do so it would help to raise incomes in the City, but would necessitate a modest expansion of population. As things stood, expansion was proceeding apace outside the City boundaries, causing traffic problems in the City but contributing nothing to the City rates.

This letter was written in March 1964, at a time when detailed discussions about traffic were taking place and the Minister was still considering the 1962 Inquiry into the Cambridge Town Map. On August 26th, just two years after the end of the Inquiry, the Minister's decision was announced.<sup>2</sup> Before looking at it, let us recall the issues. Basically the main issue was, to use the Minister's words, 'to reconcile the two functions of Cambridge as a regional centre and as a university town'. For fourteen years there had been first advocacy and then implementation of the policy of constraint on growth of the City but expansion of the villages around it. This was alleged to have detrimental economic consequences for the City, and to be helping to worsen its traffic problems. One idea for reducing the impact of traffic on the historic centre was to develop shopping elsewhere. It was argued that, even on the reduced scale put forward in 1962, this would require an expansion of population; and this in turn would require employment. There were also various road and car parking proposals, including the Lion Yard car park which had been described as urgent in 1954.

The Minister's letter of August 26th, 1964 accepted the policy of continued limitation of growth of the City. The major road proposals and the general distribution of car parks was also accepted. The decision about shopping needs to be related in more detail.

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1. This quotation is from some very valuable detailed notes prepared for me by Miss Betty Yule. Most of this brief history of events since 1947 is based on these notes, which do, however, go into further detail.

2. August appears to be a month of significance in the planning of Cambridge.



The first point is that the Minister was 'not convinced that it is necessary to pursue a drastic policy for the removal of the regional shopping facilities from inside the ring of Colleges'. On the other hand he found the congestion of people and traffic within that range to be 'intolerable'. He felt that the various road, car park, and other proposals would be inadequate to relieve congestion if shopping was kept within the ring of colleges, since this 'would result in both an intensified use of shopping space and a net increase in its total area; and these factors would add to the congestion . . . '.

In reaching this important conclusion the Minister had kept in mind 'the likelihood that the existing conditions of congestion have kept down the number of shoppers in the central area . . . '. He also argued that with the growth of supermarkets and of car ownership worse was likely to come. The remedy had to be the provision of some other location for 'these high intensity shopping uses'. Then comes the important statement that this should be 'as close as possible to the central area, so that it may conveniently be visited by shoppers at the same time as they visit the existing central area'. When car parking and access roads were taken into account, the area 'to the east of Emmanuel Road and north of Parker Street' was clearly indicated as the location of a new shopping centre.

Thus, in principle, the broad outline of the University's argument was accepted. The letter continued:

'The redevelopment of an area of land here for these purposes appears to the Minister to be the most urgent step to be taken to reduce congestion in the central area, and he considers that an immediate start should be made with proposals for it.'

At the same time, the volume of shopping within the ring of Colleges had to be prevented from increasing. Yet there was before the Minister a proposal for the redevelopment of Lion Yard, including not only the car park whose construction had been of concern to him and his predecessors for at least ten years, but also for 'a substantial increase in shopping floor space . . . quite apart from the tolerances which will have to be permitted on redevelopment in the remainder of the central area, unless heavy claims for compensation are to be incurred'. It was a proposal that the Minister did not like. He did 'not consider this satisfactory'. On the other hand, a high quality redevelopment had to get under way in the Lion Yard, and immediately! With no shops, it would be a financial burden to the City. Although the prospect of yet more shopping within the ring of Colleges was not pleasing to him, he seems to have felt that it was a choice between two evils. The car park was overdue, and the price for it would have to be shops.

'In order therefore to encourage rapid action, he is prepared to authorise an increase in shopping floor space to the extent of 30,000 square feet above the level existing at the date of this submission. He wishes it to be clearly understood, however, that his proposals for reducing the pressure on the central area by providing an extension outside the ring of Colleges must be implemented quickly, and a strict control must be maintained over existing central area shopping, if the present congestion is not to be increased. The Minister therefore asks that the Council will prepare a scheme for the Lion Yard concurrently (after conducting the necessary surveys) with comprehensive development or proposals for the extension of the central shopping area to the east of Emmanuel Road and north of Parker Street, and will submit them to him within the next few months'.

That was in August 1964. It may be noted that the logic of it appears to have been that the car park was necessary; that for this to be a paying proposition shops needed to be included in the development; that these were going to intensify shopping pressures even further within the ring of colleges and so extension away from the centre was even more important, and should get underway at the same time as the Lion Yard development.

While the University and the City accepted the modifications contained in the Minister's letter, the County was less happy. It asked the Minister for the information on which he had based 'his conclusions that there is likely to be a very substantial demand for increased central area type shops in Cambridge'. They wanted to know how much new shopping he thought should be provided in the City Road area. If answers were not forthcoming, they would want another Public Inquiry. In the event, there were neither answers nor an inquiry. However the City, the County, the University and various Ministries did embark on a series of detailed discussions of growth policies, shopping, traffic and other matters. At the request of the



planning authority, Messrs. Gerald Eve & Partners considered the shopping floor space requirements and concluded that, after allowing for the intensification of the existing centre and the expansion allowed for in the Lion Yard scheme, about 100,000 square feet of additional floor space would be needed by 1981. They also felt that any development of a central area extension much larger than this could be successful only if access to it and car parking made it highly favourable at the expense of the existing centre. After a great deal of deliberation, the City and County Councils reached agreement in principle (late in 1966) about a scheme that could form the basis of a detailed examination. It provided for an increase of about 120,000 square feet integrated into the existing Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street area, and for a net addition of only 7,500 square feet (compared with the 30,000 square feet reluctantly accepted by the Minister) in the Lion Yard development.

In February 1969 the City Councils consultant architects presented a draft scheme for a development in the Fitzroy–Burleigh area of 412,000 square feet of shopping floor space, amounting to a net increase of 109,000 square feet. After considering alternative procedures the City Council decided to adopt Comprehensive Development Area procedures, and the County Council formally submitted proposals for this in February 1970. Meanwhile, an outline scheme for Lion Yard had been approved by the County, with no Ministerial intervention. Construction of the first stage—the car park, began in January 1971. In April of the same year a new scheme for the Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street area was put forward. It proposed 600,000 square feet of shopping floor space, representing a net increase of 300,000 square feet. In November this was modified to a smaller scheme for 412,000 square feet, as in the earlier proposal. In the autumn of 1972 the Lion Yard car park was opened, and early in 1973 there was a Public Inquiry into a proposed redevelopment at Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street involving, once again, 600,000 square feet of shopping floor space. The Minister's decision is awaited. Whether he will consider that existing circumstances and arguments differ sufficiently from those that existed in August 1964 for a different solution now to be appropriate is yet to be seen. The decision that the Minister now takes will have consequences for the future of Cambridge far transcending those of any other decision that has yet been taken. This becomes clear in the chapters that follow.



## CONSERVATION OF CENTRAL AREAS

In the long debate about policies for Cambridge the popular villain has been traffic. There have been road and parking proposals to reduce traffic pressure. The University's objection of 1952 stated that the only solution was 'to attract traffic away from the centre by the development of a new shopping area elsewhere'. Objectors to the Lion Yard proposals in 1962 contended that while redevelopment in that locality was necessary, the area proposed was too large since the consequent increase in shopping floor space would generate too much traffic. The Minister's letter of 1964 was concerned largely with attempts to increase shopping facilities while at the same time reducing traffic congestion in the historic centre. Hardly an argument has been put forward without emphasis on the need to save the city from the pressures of traffic.

It cannot be denied that Cambridge has a traffic problem, and that there is need to do something about it. Even when the whole world seems to be asleep, and not a single car moves along the quiet streets of this ancient city, the impact of our attempts to cope with traffic is apparent. Parking meters, traffic lights, no entry signs and other devices that have to be prominent if they are to be useful are imposed upon almost every prospect. During the day there are fumes and noise from cars. Movement becomes difficult, and even dangerous. But all of this is something that can be prevented. Streets can become pedestrianised. Ring roads and by-passes can be built. Even the parking meters and traffic lights can be removed. Given the will, much of Cambridge can be freed of noisy traffic and obtrusive street furniture. It can in those respects revert to its former peaceful self. But it can never revert to its former magnificence, for even when the traffic lights have gone we shall not be able once again to build the old houses that once stood where now there are car parks, or the shops that went in a road widening scheme. The permanent impact of traffic on a town is the irreversible demolition that it engenders.

Yet when we look at Cambridge, very little of the irreversible demolition seems to have been a consequence of traffic. In an attempt to conserve the character and function of this university and market town we have constrained its growth: but we have not prevented it from becoming under greater and greater commercial pressures from an expanding and prosperous hinterland. It is these commercial pressures, mentioned in 1962 by Mr. Megarry that have brought about the irreversible changes in the townscape of Cambridge. As witnesses before the Inquiry of that year made clear, the historic centre could continue to function successfully as a sub-regional shopping centre provided that 'traders were permitted to rebuild and improve their premises'. In a few cases this rebuilding and improving has been undertaken with great sensitivity, and with a willingness to incur costs in the interests of conservation. But in other cases redevelopment has been clumsy, tasteless, insensitive and destructive.

Let me, for a moment, lay myself wide open to the charge of emotionalism, for I am seeking here not to establish an argument but to describe as well as I can something that I value and something that I deplore. Stand amongst the market stalls in the centre of Cambridge, with your back to the ancient church that hides Kings College from you. On your left is an unsightly slab of shops and offices built between the wars. It ends abruptly, giving way to Rose Crescent whose outer curve of shops, offices and restaurants has a character of its own, derived from the shape and scale of its entity. The watch shop on the corner, spoilt only by the ominous encroachment of a hanging sign at first floor level, stands next to a modern development that has just changed hands. Lower down the street the shop fronts have risen to change the appearance not only of the ground floor but even of the first floors. Soon the Georgian elevations will be no more.

The adjacent side of the square, opposite the church has, in the main, preserved its scale, despite the intrusion of an uninspired piece of cinema architecture. But at pavement level it is a different street from that suggested by the upper floors. Shop and showroom windows have been allowed to develop in a way that bears no relationship at all to the superior architecture of the buildings that they affront. Around the corner, one side of Petty Cury is being replaced. Near it stands the solid municipal monument whose name alone savours of grace and antiquity. Behind it, a quaint and undistinguished building, with a verdigris



coated cupola, displays two notices saying 'Sold'. Soon, no doubt, that too will go, and with it will go not a building of beauty but one of the corners of Cambridge.

Walk into King Street, or contemplate the future of properties about to be turned into offices at the southern end of Magdalene Bridge. Notice that a 'unique property' has just been sold freehold in King's Parade. All of this, and more, testifies to the pace and quality of change. Map 13 (see page 31) shows the cold unemotional facts of the physical extent of redevelopment in central Cambridge since 1950, the year in which the importance of preserving its character was so rightly made the plank of policy. What has happened?

The answer to this question has already been suggested. The traffic struggling to reach and to stop in the centre of Cambridge is not the villain, but the villain's vehicle. It brings in people who want to avail themselves of the shopping and other central area services, and others who work there to provide them. If they all came by quickly arriving and quickly disappearing buses, the traffic problem would be eased, but still there would be the same commercial pressures: traffic pressure is merely a barometer. Cambridge is a sub-regional centre. Its shops and offices provide services for people living as far apart as Ely and Royston or Newmarket and St. Neots. It is at the centre of one of the most rapidly expanding populations in England. Added to this are the services required by a very sizeable and growing tourist trade, which we study later in this Report. Finally, we must note that although the population of the city has not grown very much, the spending power of its citizens has. Growing tourism, a hinterland population whose growth has exceeded expectations (according to the Town Clerk's letter of March, 1964) and a general growth in purchasing power have combined to increase the prospective trade of its centre out of all proportion to the constricted expansion of its own population. It has also been out of all proportion to the amount of floor space available for shopping and other commercial purposes in the historic centre and in the second shopping and commercial area at Fitzroy Street-Burleigh Street. In this second centre redevelopment has been effectively halted by the protracted debate about its future: attempts to squeeze more floor space, or better organised floor space, out of existing sites has been concentrated into historic Cambridge and its immediate fringes. Developments in the suburbs have probably done little more than take up the trade of corner shops. Their importance has been local and restricted, as we show in more detail in Part Two. Nothing wrought or permitted by the planners has significantly reduced the growing sub-regional commercial pressures on central Cambridge. To some extent, improved access and car parking facilities have instead increased them. Three-quarters of the shoppers who park their cars in central Cambridge come from outside the city.

As trade and profits grow, both the occupiers and the owners of property see the attractions of redevelopment. Although this is a statement of which the truth is obvious to some it may be disputed, or not fully appreciated, by others; and it therefore needs some elaboration.

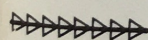
A tenant shopkeeper has to make sufficient profits from his sales to pay his rent, his rates, his wage bill, his fuel, postal and insurance bills, and any interest on overdrafts and capital tied up in stock. If he fails to do this then eventually he goes out of business. It is quite easy for him to calculate a level of takings that, in this sense, will just keep him in business. Beyond that level, all the profits that he makes is sure profit, that can be put into his own pocket after payment of taxes. A small shopkeeper with basic annual costs of, say, £9000 may need to take perhaps £30,000 in order to cover them, depending on his profit margins. If, in fact, he takes £35,000 he makes a certain profit for himself, before tax. If he takes £40,000 he doubles that profit for himself, before tax.

This means that even a small growth in the difference between his takings and the level of takings that will cover his overheads, can have a great significance for the shopkeeper. It can allow him to clear any overdraft, and, if he is so minded, to invest more in stock, in the hope of increasing his sales even further. A more efficient use of existing floor space may often be possible, but eventually there comes a time when further increases in sales, expressed in real terms (after allowing for price changes) will be possible only with major reconstruction or expansion. In either case his overheads may increase, and this is a factor that he will keep in mind, but as his sales fail to increase simply because he has no more space, while he sees shops around him taking more and more, sooner or later he is likely to try to expand, either by taking the tenancy of adjacent property, or by seeking larger premises. If he does the former, some type of redevelopment is likely. If he does the latter he is likely to vacate his existing shop and to leave its owner with an opportunity

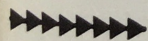




# KEY



Conservation Area boundary



Central Study Area boundary



Commercial Redevelopment



College and University Development



Other non-Commercial Redevelopment



Remaining Commercial/Residential Areas

Map 13

Redevelopment in Central Cambridge

1951 - 1973



to reconsider its use, and his neighbour with the temptation to expand into it, bringing some redevelopment with him.

The shop owner is likely to redevelop for other reasons. So far as he is able to do so, he will set a rent that procures for him a maximum return from what he owns. As the takings of shops increase, and he raises his rents so that they reflect the profit being earned by his tenant, a point is reached when he considers that the most profitable thing for him to do is to put a different building on the site that he owns—in other words, to redevelop. The essential point is that as the shopkeepers net profits rise the property owner tries to take more rent from him, and in order to maintain his good location the shopkeeper is likely to pay it. At the same time prospective shopkeepers, and especially the multiple shop organisations, seeing the prosperity of the town's shopping centre start seeking accommodation there. Both from within the town and from outside it, there are increased demands for shopping space.

In any town the supply of central area shopping space is limited at any one time. Most centres can expand outwards by absorbing and redeveloping the fringe areas. But these are normally less in demand than the areas lying at the heart of the town. Many shopkeepers wish to occupy premises that are close to multiple or well-known local shops, and for them a location in a new development on the edge of the centre will be unattractive. Thus, even in a town where it is easy for the shopping centre to expand radially, there will remain growing demands for the occupation of space in the heart of the established centre. As the shopping area expands radially, and thereby attracts even more shoppers, so the trade of those in the heart area grows even further, augmenting the demand to occupy space there.

As more existing or potential shopkeepers wish to take up space, they compete by expressing willingness to pay higher rents. The property owners react by raising rents, or selling at a profit. On both scores, there is pressure to use space more efficiently, and as rents go on rising so eventually redevelopment becomes the most profitable policy for the owner of the building even if it displaces the existing tenant. He squeezes as large a quantity of rentable floor space as he possibly can on to the plot of ground that he owns, and arranges it in a way that will strike a tenant as efficient and capable of being used intensively.

Whether the shop is owned by its occupier or rented on a lease, the result of an intense desire to occupy more trading space in a very tightly defined area will be redevelopment. Small old fashioned shops will be converted into more modern ones facilitating the better use of space. Sometimes a floor is added. Larger modern windows more adapted to the display of goods, will appear. Adjacent shops will be bought by a single purchaser and converted into a larger efficient trading unit. In most cases, as leases fall in and the owners of buildings seek to maximise their profits, the independent shopkeeper of limited means will be unable to offer a rent high enough to preserve his tenancy. A multiple wins, and usually proclaims it by producing its standard shop front that, whatever its merit, deprives the town of one more sign of its own identity. So does its character change.

This summary of one aspect of central area change is, of course, incomplete. A full analysis of the causes and consequences of central area redevelopment appears elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> and it is worthwhile summarising here a few points that are part of that story. Obviously, even without growing prosperity there are important forces that frequently lead to redevelopment. Declining prosperity may do so. Changes in social habits have led to it. The ravages of wind, rain and natural change may make a building unsafe and in need of repair or demolition. All of this is beyond dispute: but none of it alters the fact that growing prosperity is a pressure for redevelopment, and that unless there is some form of public or official intervention, the final decision about whether, when and how to redevelop is taken with considerations of costs and profits in mind. When a town abounds in historic buildings that, through the passage of time, must deteriorate and so present heavy financial burdens if they are to be maintained, the temptation to compare renovation costs and the consequent financial benefits with the costs and financial benefits of redevelopment is always present: and in most cases the profitable course is to redevelop. The unprofitable burden of preservation joins forces with the desire to use space more efficiently and strengthens the pressure for change.

1. See J. Parry Lewis, *Building Cycles and Britain's Growth*, London, 1965, and D. F. Medhurst & J. Parry Lewis, *Urban Decay*, London, 1969.



Let us now turn to see what has happened in Cambridge. Photographs illustrate some of the changes that took place in central Cambridge before 1939. These were days when planning and development controls as we know them today were virtually non-existent. If the owner of a property wished to demolish it and to replace it with some other building there was little that could be done to stop him. Public opinion could make itself felt, and certain building standards (devised with an eye on public health and safety rather than aesthetics) had to be observed. But if the owner wished to turn a house into a shop, or to replace a mediaeval masterpiece by a modern monstrosity, nobody had power to prevent him.

It was partly in an attempt to reduce the pace of change that a policy of constraint was imposed upon Cambridge. It came at a time when national legislation had introduced planning and development controls that added very appreciably to the power of publicly elected representatives and their officers. On the one hand, an aim of policy was to prevent the growth of further pressures on central Cambridge. On the other hand, there were now powers to control, to some extent, the degree and quality of redevelopment. Map 13 (see page 31) shows the location of all major redevelopments in central Cambridge since 1950. Some of them are illustrated in the photographs. That such extensive redevelopment has occurred during a period of constraint on the city's growth is not in any way evidence that this policy of constraint was wrong, or that it failed to work. Indeed, my mind boggles at the thought of how much redevelopment there would have been if the city had grown faster, and if the planning authorities had had weaker powers of control. In passing a verdict on a policy one has to try to consider not only what it has achieved but also what it has prevented: and one can rarely know the full extent of that.

Much more important are questions about whether this policy is correct for the future. Let us look at the main points that have emerged. The first point that must be made is that commercial pressures are at the root of central area redevelopment. While it is possible that planning policies for Cambridge and Cambridgeshire have reduced these below the level that they would otherwise have reached, it is abundantly evident that they have not succeeded in containing them at anything like their former levels. It is now clear that while the various controls exercised by the City and County Councils have undoubtedly saved us from much, they have been unable to prevent redevelopment of a scale, location and quality that must cause concern to all who seek the conservation of historic Cambridge. Quite as important as individual buildings are rows, terraces, lanes and squares whose historic and aesthetic appeal derives from their scale, shape, unity, internal relationships and setting, rather than from the merits of any one building. The piecemeal destruction of these is easier, and sometimes faster, than their wholesale redevelopment. Even a miserable little building can be the key to a whole street; and when it is replaced by some redevelopment the character of the street will go. Decisions to allow redevelopments of this kind can destroy the character of a town very quickly: and they are often very difficult to avoid. If the commercial pressure is strong enough, and the applicant persistent enough, sooner or later permission is likely to be given.

It is true that redevelopment was halted during the war, and that in the last twenty years we have perhaps had some of the redevelopment that would otherwise have occurred in the forties. There is also abundant evidence that redevelopment tends to go in waves: but there is quite as much evidence that these waves are related to population growth, and that in rapidly growing areas they may disappear altogether. One question to which we must address ourselves now is the likelihood of their doing so in Cambridge.

We have seen that various commitments in the market towns and in the villages of Cambridgeshire permit an expansion of 120,000 in the sub-region's population by about 1981. This is an expansion that may or may not occur, but which has already been accepted by the various planning authorities through a series of decisions. Recent government endeavours to release building land more quickly and to accelerate the use of existing planning consents are going to make its occurrence more likely. If it is fully achieved then it will mean an increase of about 30% in the sub-region's population. Not all of these people will spend all of their money in central Cambridge, and those living on the edges of the sub-region may spend little of it there. On the other hand, it is precisely this kind of dispersed growth throughout the sub-region that has played the main role in producing the commercial pressures that we have been considering.

There are, of course, other factors at work. Purchasing power has been growing, and is likely to continue to grow. Tourism seems likely to increase. Spending by commercial and industrial firms, and by hotels and



boarding houses has to be considered. All of these push up the total volume of sales in Cambridge shops. To some extent it will be possible to cope with this increase through more efficient utilisation of existing floor space, which is a matter discussed in Part Two of this report. On balance, even without any increase in population in the sub-region, we can probably expect an increase of at least a tenth in the total floor space requirements of Cambridge between 1971 and 1981. It could well be more. If we assume that 'committed' growth is going to take place, it is difficult to see how our shopping floor space requirements can fail to expand by at least a third.

There was a time when it seemed to me that the proposed expansion of shopping into the Fitzroy Street-Burleigh Street area was on too large a scale. It looked as if there would be empty shops for many years; and it is even now my belief that there may be empty shops for a few years. But it is pretty clear that, provided no competing expansion takes place, and that retail expenditure grows in the seventies at the same average rate as it did in the sixties, then a sub-regional population growth of approaching the 'committed' 30% during the decade, could mean that the Fitzroy Street-Burleigh Street development will turn out to be too small. Ten years from now, if not sooner, there will probably be much the same commercial pressure on the historic centre as now. It will also be felt in the Fitzroy Street-Burleigh Street area. The big difference will be that there the shops will still be new, and unlikely to be redeveloped. The desire to expand or to be more efficient users of space will be manifested in renewed pressure to redevelop the historic city centre, and in pressure for the Fitzroy Street-Burleigh Street centre to expand. The greatest pressure for expansion will be in the direction towards the city centre. We will have not two centres, but one, stretching from Magdalene Bridge to Burleigh Street: and the attempts to take pressures off the historic centre will have made it a segment of a larger centre. Tourists will still shop mainly where the colleges are. If anything, this will make that segment still the most profitable place in which to have a shop. Land values there will be higher than elsewhere in the extended centre of Cambridge, and so will be the pressure to redevelop. If the experience of the last twenty years is to be taken as a guide, the year 2000, when some of us hope still to be alive, will be welcomed by a Cambridge whose centre will have lost many of the buildings and streets that we now cherish. Commercial pressures will have triumphed over conservation. There will always be some redevelopment, and some of it may turn out to be aesthetically pleasing. But in the centre of a historic town we should try to ensure that the pace of redevelopment is slowed down, and not dictated by the growth of commerce. That is one of the problems that now faces us. It concerns us not only in Cambridge but also elsewhere in the sub-region, as we shall shortly see.





1. Cambridge: Kings Parade

Kings Parade, Cambridge (1), a piece of townscape which illustrates clearly the subtle relationship between town and gown which pressures for development are threatening to upset.





2. Cambridge: Peas Hill

Some sites in Cambridge are obviously underdeveloped when compared with neighbours (2).





3. Cambridge: Guildhall Street

When conditions are favourable property may change hands with a view to redevelopment (3).





4. Cambridge: St. Andrews Street

Redevelopment can be on a limited scale as in St. Andrews Street (4) . . .





5. Cambridge: Petty Cury/Lion Yard

or may be much more extensive as in the case of the Lion Yard Scheme (5).





6. Cambridge: King Street





7. Cambridge: Peas Hill

The effect of redevelopment on the townscape of Cambridge varies greatly (6, 7), but if it took place on a wide enough scale the character of the city could change completely.





8. Ely from the South East



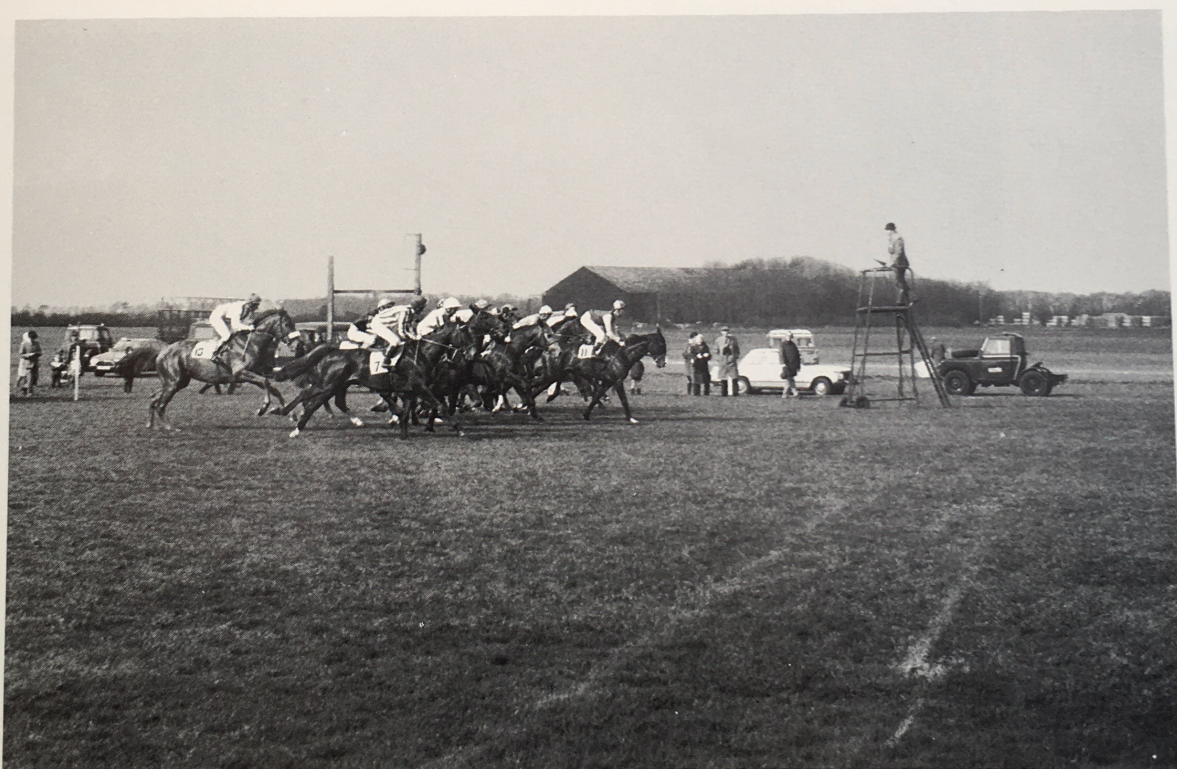
9. Ely: Market Square

The focal point of a large agricultural area, Ely Cathedral dominates the scene from the Fens (8) and its presence pervades the commercial heart of the town (9).





10. Newmarket: High Street



11. Newmarket

A market town to the east of Cambridge for which a by-pass is being constructed (10), Newmarket is internationally known for its links with horse racing (11).





12. Haverhill: Queen Street



13. Haverhill

The small scale village character of Queen Street (12) belies the rapid expansion that has taken place in Haverhill over the past 15 years (13).





14. Saffron Walden: King Street



15. Saffron Walden: Market Square

Although a town of considerable historic and architectural interest with a relatively low growth rate, Saffron Walden still has to contend with commercial pressure for redevelopment in the centre (14, 15).





16. Royston from Therfield Heath



17. Royston: High Street

The setting of Royston at the foot of a chalk scarp is one of the most pleasing in the Sub-Region (16), whilst the diversion of through traffic from the High Street has improved the environment in the main shopping area (17).





18. St. Neots: Market Square



19. St. Neots: Market Square

St. Neots is an attractive market town typical of those around Cambridge; it shows clearly the pressures for change caused by expansion (18) whilst the problems created by traffic remain to be solved (19).





20. Huntingdon: High Street



21. Huntingdon: Chequers Court

The largest of the market towns in the Sub-Region, Huntingdon provides a wide range of shopping facilities along High Street (20) and in the recently completed pedestrian precinct at Chequers Court (21).





22. St. Ives: Broadway



23. St. Ives: Bridge Street

The increasing use of the River Ouse for pleasure craft and other recreational activities is leading to pressure on the attractive riverside areas of St. Ives (22), whilst heavy traffic continues to use its narrow streets and ancient bridge (23).





24. Fenland farming near Ely



25. Therfield Heath, Royston

The topography of the Sub-Region varies from the extreme flatness of the Fens in the north (24) to the rolling chalklands around Royston in the south (25). Little of the open countryside is not farmed.



## THE VILLAGE AND THE COUNTRYSIDE

Cambridge is not the only town in the sub-region; nor do all the people live in towns. The problem of its central area conservation is of national, and even international, importance; and, at least in so far as they affect this, so are questions about its size. But other towns have similar problems, on a smaller scale, which are of equal concern to the residents of those towns and in some cases to many other people. It is not simply the cathedral that attracts tourists to Ely. Office development is beginning to threaten Saffron Walden, which has one of the most interesting and beautiful mediaeval street patterns to be found in any English town. These and other urban conservation problems have yet to be considered, but however we tackle them they are not going to have sub-regional consequences of the same strategic importance as those of Cambridge. This is not because they are less important in a deeper sense, but because they are in smaller towns less central to the functioning of the sub-region. In postponing detailed consideration of them until Part Two we are simply emphasising the need to concentrate here on the main framework.

Part of that framework must concern the rural areas, which we have hardly mentioned: but it has to be elaborated in its context, and that once again takes us back to policy decisions of the fifties.

The Holford Report recommended that the now familiar 'Green Belt' controls should be applied to Cambridge, with urgent housing developments deflected to the inner ring of villages, shown on Map 14 (see page 53). It was decided that in order to slow down the rate of population growth, industrial expansion within a radius of about seven miles of Cambridge should be controlled. Apart from moderate expansion of existing firms, industrial growth should be deflected to the market towns.

These basic principles have guided Cambridgeshire County Council's planning decisions for several years, but certain modifications have been made to them. It was recognised in the early sixties that the 'inner ring villages' were suffering damaging pressures from the demand for housing land. Moreover, their residents lived too close to Cambridge for them to exert no pressures on it. As 'deflection areas' they were of little use: and growing car ownership made this all the more apparent. Indeed, there are probably more cars in central Cambridge because of this policy than there would have been if, instead, there had been a similarly sized expansion of the city itself.

Recognising that the inner ring villages had been expanded as much as seemed to be desirable, the authority adopted several villages further out from Cambridge as places to which housing demands could be deflected: but the purpose was not simply deflection. By a suitable choice of villages, and by making use of the valuable village colleges, it was possible to facilitate the growth of key villages to act as service centres for the surrounding rural areas, including the smaller villages. Most of these key villages are approximately twelve miles from Cambridge, and so in many cases lie nearer to the market towns. The policy may be described as a 'Green Belt and Satellites' policy, and, along with the development of the market towns and their hinterlands, has led to the present City-Regional structure that characterises the area with which we are concerned.

This policy of dispersal, with the expansion of key villages, has had its effects both on rural population and on Cambridge. In some cases the village expansion has brought with it a general improvement in facilities. Sewerage and street lighting have been improved. New schools have been built, and additional shops have opened. In these and other ways, life in the villages has been made easier than it would have been without this kind of expansion. This is not necessarily to say that the original villagers welcome it.

The dispersal policy has also helped to provide people working in Cambridge with a housing choice—between town and country, although it has been argued that the choice has been eroded by the dearth of urban development. It has done something, which is explored further in Part Two, to shift pressures off Cambridge by diverting shopping trips and work trips to other places. Generally, it has enabled many



thousands of people to live in what one school of planners considers to be an ideal pattern—the 'green city region' which is both dispersed and socially and functionally linked. Sprawl has been prevented, or at least reduced to manageable proportions in the villages. At the same time, the very important 'edge-qualities' of Cambridge have been protected, and the complete engulfment of the more immediate villages prevented.

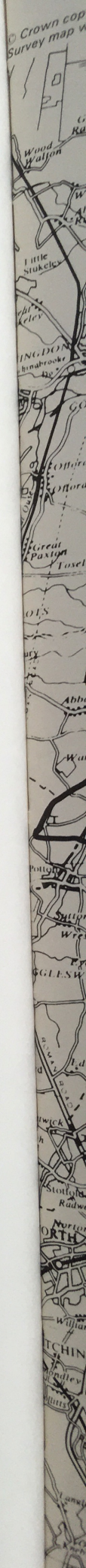
There are, however, some criticisms to be made of this approach. It is difficult to develop local employment opportunities in small scattered locations where the supply of labour is poor and the advantages of proximity to other firms are not to be found. We have already seen how Cambridge has become more and more important as an employment centre, despite its slow growth of population. This is an important point not only for Cambridge but also for the villages, and it is likely to become more important. In many cases people with work in Cambridge have settled in a village several miles away. What is now beginning to matter is that the children of these people are having to seek work, and are finding it necessary to make the same kind of journey as their parents chose to make, but it cannot always be in the same direction or at the same time of day, and they may not be so well blessed as their parents with private transport.

It is also true that despite some improvement in shopping facilities none of the villages has been able to develop a shopping centre with a sufficient range of shops to take any appreciable pressure off Cambridge. Equally, the residents of these villages have lacked easy access to good shopping facilities. A contributory factor here is the comparative absence of suitably directed public transport services. If key villages are really to function they need good communications not only with their own hinterlands but also between each other.

These two problems, of providing sufficient jobs and shops in the rural areas to meet the demands of rural population, are not easily solved; and the expansion of population without their solution has led both to a growth of pressure on Cambridge and to the need of the rural resident to spend more time and money travelling than does his urban counterpart. What makes it worse, both as a factor in the congestion of Cambridge and as a constraint on the mobility of the villagers, is the need to use cars.

In many cases the growth of the villages has led to what can reasonably be described as a remote suburbanisation. The villages have become the dormitories of people working in Cambridge and travelling there by car: and for them the answer to mobility has sometimes been to get a second car for use by other members of the household. Village growth of this kind does little, if anything, to encourage the provision of better bus services. Small villages in scattered locations are costly to serve, involving as they do long distances, tortuous routes and limited custom: and car-owning commuters not only provide few additional passengers but to some extent may reduce the viability of the bus service both by giving lifts and by causing localised congestion. We look into these matters in more detail in Part Two, as well as in a later chapter of this section of the study, where we make certain recommendations about public transport in the sub-region. The important thing for us to note is that the dispersal policy has not led to any perceptible slowing down in the deterioration of bus and train services.

The process of remote suburbanisation to which I have referred is one about which there must be much debate. Some villages have grown so much, and in such a way, that their earlier appearance has changed dramatically and even disastrously. Small villages and hamlets have been totally changed in character. Bottisham, Comberton, Histon and Haslingfield may be cited as examples. Yet if population is expanding it has to be housed somewhere, and it may be argued that if some villages have already changed so much that their character has been lost then there is one fewer argument against even further change. There is some truth in that. The expansion of services such as education and sewerage tends to be more costly for small scattered communities than for one larger development, either because of the absence of the usual economies of scale or because of the need to spend money on the links. For example, if the village colleges are to be re-organised to cope with comprehensive education they require catchment population of between 10,000 and 15,000; and this requires the provision of suitable transport for the children who are dispersed within that area. If attempts to benefit from economies of scale are introduced into the solution of sewage problems, on the argument that one large works is cheaper than five smaller ones, the costs of providing and maintaining the sewerage pipes from five villages to one station have to be considered.





# Map 14 The Inner Ring Villages

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These and other arguments are considered more fully later in the Report. Here we must make three points that need to be kept in mind when we turn to the evolution and evaluation of our strategies. First, the logic of the dispersal policy at present favoured requires that growth should be deflected to locations that minimise interaction with Cambridge. But the policy fails to stem the growth of pressures on Cambridge arising from this dispersed growth of population. These pressures generate demands for further development closer to the City, and at times it is very difficult to resist them.

The second point is that the policy has not so far shown itself to be an appreciable contribution to solving the problems of the villages. It is true that in some cases there have been specific improvements: but more and more the villages have become dormitory areas in which the original residents have bought their improvements in sewage disposal at the price of the character of the village in which they have lived. The contribution to public transport has been either negligible or negative.

Finally, we may note that in very many cases village expansion has reached the stage where any further expansion will be at the expense of the character of yet another village. Some will consider this to be a cost that is worth paying. Here I simply point it out.

Later in this Report we explain how we set about considering the amenities and needs of people in different villages and how planning policies of one kind or another would affect them. It was an essential part of our study.

It would, however, be wrong to think of the villages simply in terms of their expansion and their car owning commuters. Here we have the historical homes of our agricultural communities. Although the people now working in agriculture in the sub-region number only about half of the 1951 total, the industry is still much stronger in this area than it is in most other parts of the country. What we often forget is that even in the area immediately surrounding Cambridge it is very strong. There are, in fact, more agricultural workers in the Cambridge employment exchange area than there are in any other areas of the eight into which the sub-region is divided. On the other hand it is the area around Ely that has the highest proportion of its workers in farming.

The decline in the industry's work force has been national. In many agricultural areas it has been accompanied by rural depopulation, which has been noticeable in our sub-region only in the area around Ely. There the shrinking Fens present a threat of some importance to the future vitality of this its all important industry. Much more detailed studies in Part Two record other changes in agriculture, as attention has shifted more and more from livestock to crops. But, to keep the facts in some perspective, we may point out now that, despite this, livestock farming remains important, especially in certain parts of the sub-region. Indeed, there are half as many pigs in the sub-region as there are people.

Agriculture, like most human activities requires land and people. The sub-region probably has in each of these an endowment of above average quality; but neither should be misused, either by a failure to appreciate its quality or by an excessive adulation of it. In considering our possible strategies for the sub-region we have kept in mind the importance of using good quality agricultural land only if its use brings benefits adequately exceeding those that some other strategy might bring. We have, too, kept in mind that declining villages mean a reduced supply of local labour for the farms. When a village sometimes needs to grow if it is not to decline, this has tended to pose the problem of choice in an interesting way, for it has meant that the local supply of labour has been maintainable only through the use of good quality land on which to house not simply the farm labour but many other people as well.

Urban and suburban expansion affect the farmer in many ways. One of the most important is through the use of the countryside for leisure. There is hardly need here to emphasise how we can simultaneously reduce both the beauty of the countryside and the productivity of a farm by the careless use, or neglect, of gates, footpaths and fields. We can also do it by indiscriminate camping, by crowding country roads with holiday traffic, and by remaking roads in such a way that farmers lose their time honoured rights to let their tractors crawl along the verges. Each of these points may seem to be trivial and out of place in this part of the Report, but they are to be thought of as being representative of many other points. As we



acquire more leisure time and more mobility our demands upon the countryside, both for formal and informal leisure activities, are growing. We need to take account of this.

There is one source of leisure open to all of us who are able to travel, although it is the traveller who threatens it, and ironically often fails to avail himself of it. The landscape of the sub-region is varied. In places it must be described as beautiful by almost anybody who sees it. Elsewhere, in places where it may be less dramatic, its conservation may be equally important. The conservation of natural life, on the ground and in the rivers, must be so. Wherever redevelopment takes place, or building appears on virgin land, the ecological costs should be kept in mind. In this context it must unfortunately be admitted that sometimes the farmer is as great a culprit as the builder. We should, too, keep the archaeological costs in our reckoning. In this area that was one of the first to come under the 'Anglo-Saxon' influence, serious archaeological surveys still have much to discover—if the mechanical diggers do not destroy evidence that centuries have afforded the protection of nature. On this point there can be little controversy. Whatever development may be recommended, and wherever it may be, there can be nothing lost by consulting at an early stage with the archaeological experts at Cambridge University.

Criss-crossing the sub-region, at one and the same time both opening up and threatening the countryside, are our main roads. They connect places within the sub-region, but they also act as routes into and out of it, and through it. It is, of course, the through traffic that arouses most resentment. At times we all arouse resentment in others for exactly the same reason. It is, however, both a right and a duty of the residents of any area to emphasise the problems and qualities of their own place. In the sub-region much of the through traffic links the eastern ports and industry. It is traffic whose volume is expected to grow. Present road schemes are doing a great deal to meet these expectations but more will be needed, even without any further growth of sub-regional activity. This means that there will be yet further encroachment upon our agricultural land.

It is important for this to be seen in perspective. Most farmers would prefer seeing a sub-regional motorway on which all of the container lorries travel, to meeting enormous tankers in agricultural lanes where there is no room to pass. Given adequate routes across the sub-region, heavy vehicles with no local business can be kept off the country roads. It should be a matter of policy to do so.

In this brief chapter I have touched upon just a few of those matters that are of most concern to people living in rural areas. We have considered these and many others in evolving and evaluating alternative strategies for the sub-region. A very much fuller account appears later in the Report.



## FORMS OF DISPERSAL

Our main task has been the evolution of alternative strategies for the sub-region, an assessment of their advantages and disadvantages, and the selection of one of them as a recommended strategy. An account of how we set about this part of our work would be out of place here, except for the brief statement that we have been concerned with exploring possibilities and trying to devise a brighter future rather than with simply reacting to present problems. We have attempted to discover opportunities, and to show how to seize them while they are still with us. We have also had to explore the probable consequences of continuing with present policies, and it is with a study of these that we begin our account of the alternatives before us. Once again we must draw attention to the supporting evidence and analysis that appears in Part Two.

The essence of the present dispersal strategy has already been described. Here we begin to consider how, where, to what extent and with what consequences further population growth can be accommodated within the context of this dispersal strategy.

We started by excluding two sets of villages as being, from the very outset, unsuitable for growth beyond existing commitments in the context of the dispersal strategy: those in the 'inner ring' where further growth is likely to be tantamount to an extension of Cambridge itself because of the nature and degree of the interaction with the city, and those where expansion would seriously affect the functioning of the radio telescope.

We then examined each of the villages that is already considered to be a growth point, and assessed its capacity for further growth beyond existing commitments. In doing so we considered the appearance and character of the village, the degree of spare capacities in its existing services, and the ease with which these could be expanded. The result was a list of fourteen villages, already held to be growth points, where further growth beyond existing commitments seems to be acceptable according to the criteria adopted by us.

The next step was to identify potential new growth centres, and to assess their capacities. This began with a survey of each village in an attempt to establish the physical capability for further growth within the existing village framework, on a scale that could be absorbed without damage to the essential character and environmental quality of the village. This was a task that inevitably called for personal judgment. It was entrusted primarily to a member of the planning team who had revealed an aptitude and realistic sensitivity in these matters, and who had never owed allegiance to either the City or the County authorities. I am happy to rely entirely on his judgment in these matters, although neither he nor I would wish to suggest that every judgment made by him is necessarily superior to any other that could be made.

Once the capacity to absorb growth had been established we still had to consider such matters as the ability of local education and health services to cope with growth, the capacity of existing and proposed sewage schemes, the function of the village in terms of its suitability as a local shopping and service centre, as an employment centre, and as a limited community centre. We also considered accessibility, and relationships with existing and proposed road networks. Road noise and disturbance was taken into account.

Eight villages emerged in this way as having capacity for growth beyond existing commitments, although they are not at present considered to be growth points. All of them have existing commitments, which means that although not 'growth points' they are villages where growth is permitted.

Our attention then turned to areas where certain rural problems are especially acute. These included mainly such factors as inaccessibility to shops, doctors and schools. In each case we considered the extent to which the problem could be eased, or solved, by some degree of growth, and how other factors would be affected by any such growth. We also considered other solutions, including the possibilities of improved public



transport. We were led in this way to the identification of eleven villages where growth could contribute to the solution of local problems.

Two groups of settlements remained for examination. In carrying out the exercise just summarised we had omitted the villages outside the existing boundaries of the county of Cambridgeshire, but felt by us to be within the sub-region. An important point about these is that while they may be deemed to be part of the sub-region they may more properly be described as being in that hazy band that has allegiance to more than one sub-regional centre. The policies operating in adjacent sub-regions have to be considered, while attempts to expand these villages could be described almost as attempts to push population expansion so far out from Cambridge that it is outside the sub-region. With these considerations in mind, we repeated the procedures just described and identified four villages, all in Huntingdonshire, that seemed capable of being expanded.

The other group of settlements consisted of the market towns. Here we have to face a fact that began to emerge in the last paragraph. If the recommendations of this Report are to be implemented, the easiest way of securing the necessary action is to ensure that as far as is practicable the major recommendations concern one administrative county. This means that the market towns where our recommendation could be most easily implemented when the new local boundaries take effect are Ely, Huntingdon and St. Neots. It happens that appreciable growth of St. Neots and Huntingdon has already been included in our calculation of commitments. Growth of Royston (not to be confused with growth of the Cambridgeshire villages to its north) would at present be in conflict with Hertfordshire's policy. But, from a sub-regional point of view, a more important consideration is that Royston is pulled in many directions. It lies in the hazy band to which we have already referred. Haverhill has a large committed growth. Saffron Walden has a conservation problem that makes its growth a very questionable proposition. Newmarket has a well-argued case for only a slow growth. In short, we come back to Ely as the only market town where growth beyond commitments should be encouraged in sub-regional interests. It is, in any case, a town where a modest growth, carefully devised so that the character of the town is not lost, could help to solve some local problems.

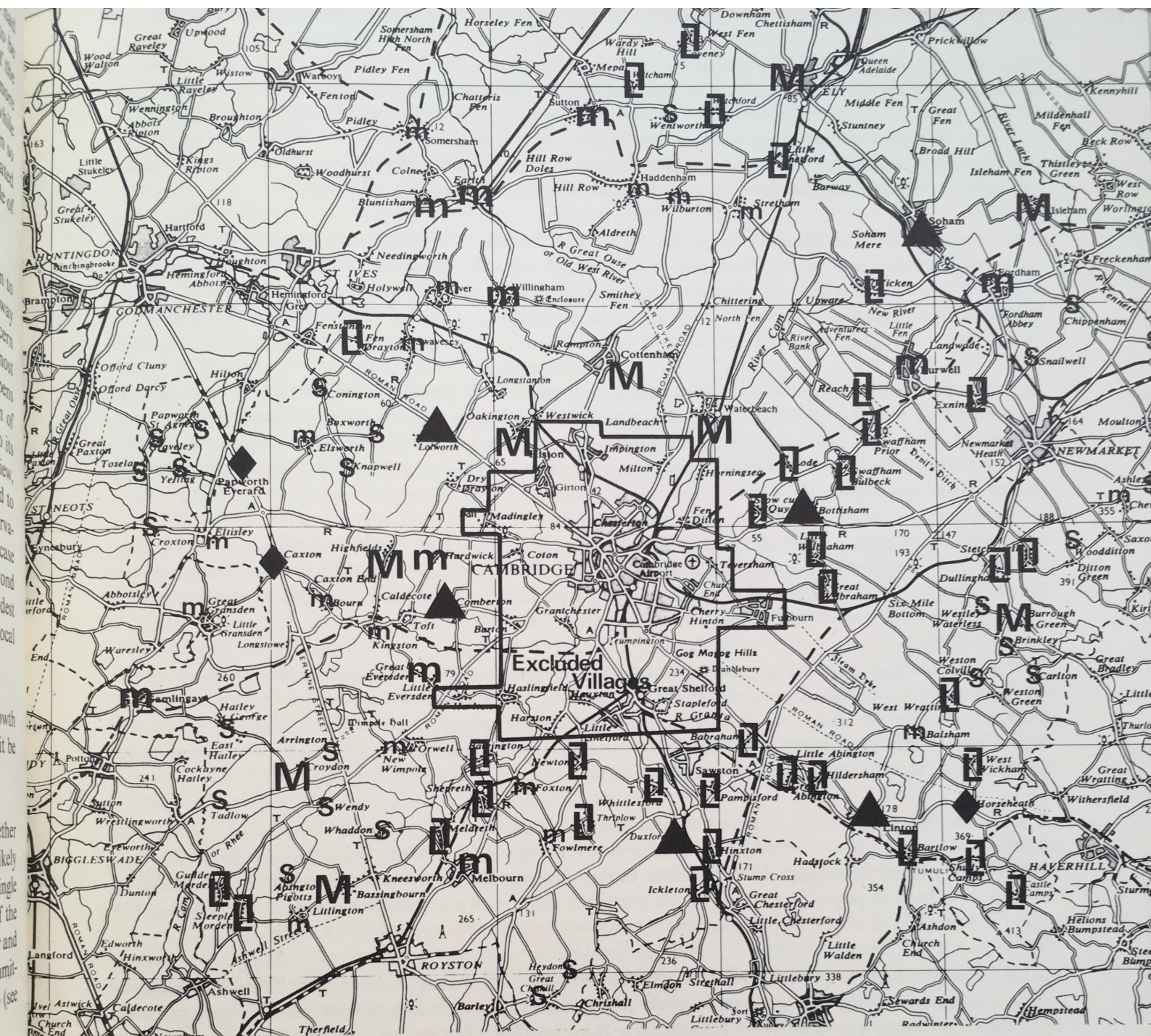
When all of this is pulled together we find that a dispersal strategy could accommodate a population growth in the sub-region of about 47% above 1971 level. This is a statement that needs to be elaborated, lest it be misunderstood.

We have already seen that existing commitments imply an increase in population of about 30%. Whether all of these commitments will be taken up is uncertain, but present policies seem to make it more likely rather than less likely. What I am now saying is that, even if growth is pushed to the limit in every single village, and halted only when further expansion would become particularly costly, either because of the need to expand basic service facilities in an uneconomic way, or because of the impact on the character and appearance of the village, the most with which the sub-region could cope is an increase of present commitments plus about half that much again. The new distribution of the population is shown in Map 15 (see page 59).

Even this is probably an overstatement, for a population growth of that magnitude, dispersed over the sub-region, would engender a great deal of traffic between villages of a kind that could lead to very difficult problems of congestion. Peak hour flows into major employment centres would also be a problem. This, however, is to anticipate our evaluation. The point to make now is that, however far ahead we may be looking, a sub-regional growth of about 47% is, in our view, the absolute maximum that can be acceptably accommodated within a dispersal strategy of the kind at present operating. If and when that level is reached, any further growth would have to be in some other form, such as urban expansion, or the deliberate conversion of a group of villages into a town, or something like that.

I realise that at this stage some people will probably be wondering why we are talking of a growth of 47% and even more. What we have to keep in mind is that although our main interest is in the next fifteen or twenty years, it is absolutely essential that we look much further into the future. Decisions intended to define the road and settlement pattern in 1984 will, if they are implemented, define the starting point from





# KEY

- M** Major development
- m** Moderate development
- m** Minor development
- S** Special policy
- [ ]** Infill – local growth only
- ◆** Deferred
- ▲** Expanded

Map 15  
Village Dispersal Strategy



which those who plan for 1994 must work, while what they produce will be the starting point for later work. We cannot plan for a fixed horizon. We have to try to ensure that in solving the problems of today we do not create even worse problems for tomorrow. The conclusion we have just reached is that if we now decide to continue with the traditional dispersal policy then, if and when the sub-regional population ever reaches a level of about 540,000, either the planners will have to find a different way of accommodating further growth, or further growth will be costly in one of the ways we have just described, or we will have to resist all further growth, and do so effectively. The question of how far population should grow is one we consider later, when we will also consider the arguments for and against this physical pattern of growth. It is, however, necessary to mention now two disadvantages of this form of dispersal.

In mentioning these we are not pre-judging the issues. Traditional dispersal has both advantages and disadvantages, and our fuller evaluation of it emphasises this. On the other hand, even before we turn to evaluation we can usefully ask whether some modification of this policy could remove some of its more obvious disadvantages. In particular, we may note two respects in which the traditional dispersal policy seems to be deficient.

If past experience is any guide we cannot expect it to lead to a dispersal of employment, or to be effective as a means of taking pressure off the centre of Cambridge. It also leads to local problems to do with the provision of various services on a suitable scale. In an attempt to retain the advantages of a dispersal policy but to reduce these two disadvantages we therefore considered a modified form of the policy. We called it 'cluster dispersal'.

The essential feature of this modified policy is that there should be certain clusters of villages where development might take place, both by the growth of existing villages and through the creation of new settlements, in such a way that they might attract employment opportunities, and afford better prospects for various services, without detriment to village character or landscape.

A cluster of villages provides a greater concentration of people than a more scattered settlement pattern. This means that a prospective employer is likely to view the area more favourably than he would view an isolated village, since there is likely to be a more abundant supply of local labour. In this way the need to travel into Cambridge or one of the market towns is reduced, while the population growth is adding less to the pressures on Cambridge than it would otherwise do.

The increased concentration of population also provides larger catchment populations for shops. Eight scattered villages may have between them little more than eight village stores. But if the villages are clustered and movement between them is easy, a few more specialist shops are likely to arise. There could, for example, be enough population to support a chemist's shop, with a qualified pharmacist. In this way, too, there is benefit to the local population and a reduction in the extra pressure on Cambridge.

All of this depends on transport. Clustered villages are more likely to support some form of public transport than are scattered villages. The villages are closer together, which means both that the bus trips are shorter and that the villages are more likely to interact with each other. 'Dial-a-bus' schemes become more likely. Some central point in each cluster can be a stop, or terminus, on a route to Cambridge or a market town, while some more adaptable form of service can connect the villages to it. If this central point is also developed as the main shopping place in the cluster, and health centre and other facilities are provided there, the provision of services can reach a high standard, and do so more economically than would be possible with a more scattered dispersal of population.

With these arguments in mind we considered where these clusters could best be developed. Certain physical constraints like the presence of flood land, the radio telescope and so on had to be respected. We also avoided the inner ring of villages. Potential clusters were identified by an examination of the physical settlement pattern. We looked for groups of villages within a reasonable distance of each other, and with some established route network linking them. Consideration of the existing population levels, landscape and other constraints, the provision of services and other matters narrowed the list. Problems of disturbance of conservation and of practicability narrowed it further. Eventually we identified eight clusters that seemed



to be suitable for further development within this strategy. They are shown on Map 16 (see page 63). The growth envisaged consists partly of the expansion of existing villages, and partly of new settlements, possibly in the areas marked on the map.

We have already seen that a dispersed population growth based on a clustering of villages seems likely to encourage the provision of a higher degree of rural employment and services than would arise with traditional dispersal. To that extent such a policy would reduce the additional pressures imposed on Cambridge by the growth of population. Another feature of this policy is that it could accommodate, if it seemed to be appropriate, a greater increase in population than could be absorbed by a traditional dispersal policy. Along with the committed developments in the sub-region, it could provide for something like a 66% growth in total population before meeting the kind of obstacle that a traditional dispersal policy would encounter after a growth of about 47%. The importance of this is shortly to emerge.

A fuller evaluation of the merits of dispersal appears in Part Two. There are, however, two aspects of these policies that must be explored a little further here, so that the all-important matter of the scale and timing of growth can be considered in its proper context.

If we think of a population growth of, say, 40%, being 10% above the level of growth for which consent is already committed, we must think not only of a static picture of a sub-region whose population is about 150,000 higher than now, but also of the intervening stages. The growth will not occur overnight. Let us, just for the sake of argument, suppose that it takes about twenty years, with a concentration in the seventies and a slowing down in the eighties. This could mean a sub-regional expansion of about a fifth during the next five years: and almost all of this would be where growth is already committed. How could we prevent this from increasing pressures on Cambridge? If the tentative conclusions summarised towards the end of Chapter 4 are correct, the proposed Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street development will probably be enough to absorb the growth in commercial pressure at this stage. But let us now look forwards a few more years, when growth will have reached 30%: or even further to a time when it may be 40%. By then the Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street development will certainly prove to be too small. In other words, committed growth supplemented by only a very modest further growth along the traditional dispersal strategy will impose commercial, employment and traffic pressures on Cambridge, and the extension of the shopping area by the development now being considered by the Minister will at one and the same time help to attract these pressures into Cambridge but fail to prevent them from impinging on the historic centre. Pressures for further redevelopment will arise, as described in Chapter 4.

One way out of this is to try to attract the pressures to some other place. Can we, for example, try to provide for them by some out-of-town shopping centre, or some peripheral hypermarket? Certainly these are possibilities to be considered.

A similar argument is valid if we think of a cluster dispersal, but now a solution along the lines just described seems to be more likely. If one cluster is developed first, in conjunction with a hypermarket designed to serve not only the cluster but also population from elsewhere, then the initial population growth would exert little commercial pressure on central Cambridge, except for the need to purchase items of a kind not available in the hypermarket. Indeed, the cluster could provide a local support for a hypermarket that would draw some existing custom away from Cambridge. This brings us to some critical questions about the consequences of attempting to develop both the Fitzroy–Burleigh area and a hypermarket. They are questions that are shortly to be considered more fully, but even now it should be apparent that if it is to be a case of one or the other then a hypermarket outside Cambridge, or on its edge, with an associated cluster development would be more successful in taking strain off the historic centre than any development as close to that centre as Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street. This, of course, assumes that the hypermarket would be commercially viable. Our researches show that it would be. On the other hand, if the Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street development proceeds the hypermarket would have much greater difficulty in becoming viable, and would be less effective as a counter magnet to the historic centre.

The second important feature of dispersal policies concerns traffic. It is argued that petrol is at present being consumed so rapidly that we must both expect its price to rise dramatically and do all that we can to



conserve it. The government has lately urged us to devote particular attention to the possibilities of making better use of public transport in our urban areas. The policy that is most likely to depend upon a high level of car-usage and is least likely to contribute towards the development of public transport services is the traditional dispersal policy. A cluster dispersal is in these respects better. This, too, is a conclusion that is important in the development of our argument.





## KEY



New growth in cluster



Infill: related to local needs



In village growth, separate from clusters



Special policy

## Map 16

### Village Cluster Dispersal



## A SECOND CENTRE

We have seen that both the traditional dispersal policy and a cluster dispersal policy will lead to growth of pressure on the city centre, but that a hypermarket development with an associated growth in a cluster could possibly reduce this pressure.

The next question to consider is whether we can build upon this idea, and find a way of ensuring that neither committed growth nor any subsequent growth adds to the pressures already existing in the historic centre. Moreover, can we hope to see these pressures actually reduced below their present levels?

Cambridge has some very high quality shops. In particular there are three stores with a range of good quality merchandise that is not to be found elsewhere in the sub-region. Nevertheless it does not yet have a store whose range and turnover establish it firmly as a department store comparable with those that exist in larger centres. If the population of its hinterland grows by the amounts that seem likely then one or the other of the main stores will almost certainly seek to expand to this level; and if it succeeds, or seems destined to succeed, it is not unlikely that another will follow suit.

This gives some indication of the degree of pressure for expansion or redevelopment that is likely to exist. It is also to be noted that the principal towns with which Cambridge will compete for trade from its 'hazy band' are not at present as well endowed as Cambridge with major stores. If shopping opportunities improve in Cambridge in the way we have just suggested, then despite probable developments in these other towns, the dominating influence of Cambridge could well increase and extend its catchment area. This would generate further pressure for even further redevelopment.

In arguing in this way I have been very imprecise about the timing of events. There are two reasons for this. Nobody can say with any precision what population levels and purchasing power will be in 1990. We can set targets or constraints on population, and try to secure their achievement. We may be able to ensure that some upper limit is not passed, but we may have no success at all in reaching a target. Purchasing power is a variable beyond the control of the planners, and while we may predict it we have little ability to influence it. Forecasts are simply the best statements that we can make at present about the likely events of the unknown and uncertain future. Much that we predict for 1990 may turn out to be true in 1985, 1995, 2005 or even never. We should be honest about this, and not advertise a degree of predictive ability that we do not possess. Even 'the best forecasts' are very likely to be wrong.<sup>1</sup>

The second reason for my imprecision about timing is that in some respects it is not very important. This is a statement that could easily be misinterpreted. There are some developments whose success and whose impact on a town depend critically on their timing, but even this may be measured not by an absolute calendar date but relative to other events. In the history of Cambridge there has been a long and remarkable sequence of change, resulting in what must by any standards be described as a remarkable and unique city. Whether that city is set irrevocably about the destruction of its own heart now, in ten years time or in twenty years time is not very important. What is important is that we recognise now that what we have been doing has already set it on that path. If we persist we may at times be able to retard or to halt our progress along it, but not for long. If we are to prevent the destruction of the city centre we have to move onto a different path. That is easiest now.

A policy that leaves the city centre as the only growth point for central area facilities is not the answer to the problems of Cambridge. However much constraint and control is exercised, growing population and purchasing power will at some time or the other become so strong in their influence that further redevelopment of the historic centre will take place. It will take only one committee only one decision for all the

1. For an elaboration see my series of articles on models and forecasting in planning published in *Built Environment* during 1972-73.



determination of other committees and other meetings to be shown to have been but a temporary obstacle to the eventual success of commercial pressures. Development close to the historic centre, such as Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street is equally but a temporary diversion destined soon to return to the original path of events, as we have already argued. If the historic centre of Cambridge is to be preserved, in the sense that its redevelopment is dominated by aesthetic considerations and removed as far as possible from commercial pressures, then there is need of a new focus not only for existing pressures but for any further growth that people now or in twenty or forty or a hundred years time may encourage, permit or be unable to prevent. Every year that goes by sees one more bite at what remains historic in the historic centre. We have an opportunity not only to prevent this but also to ensure that developers in future generations will not want even to nibble at the fabric of this historically and culturally important university area.

The starting point that we have to recognise is that pressure on the shopping centre will increase with the wish to make central area purchases. These are purchases made in shops of a kind that can exist only if they are in the centre of a sizeable population and in locations close enough to other shops of a similar quality. Such central area shops cannot be dispersed. They depend on their proximity to each other. They also attract shoppers who make purchases in other shops that are in some ways their satellites, capable of existing elsewhere, but depending for their custom on the fact that they exist where they do.

If such a centre is under undue pressure it cannot be effectively relieved for long simply by such devices as a ring of supermarkets, or even a ring of hypermarkets, for while these will have some effect none of them will develop unaided into a shopping centre, providing those facilities that draw people into central areas. Although some purchases of convenience goods may be made away from the centre, growing population and income will generate growing demands for central area type goods, and these will be bought in central area shops, which will still attract enough trade to attract, as well, their satellite shops as now. One reason why historic Cambridge can sell so many very ordinary items is that it provides an opportunity for the purchase of so much that is less ordinary.

In the case of Cambridge there is the additional central area trade derived from tourists and the university. This is likely to grow, and no new centre will capture much of it. Thus the inadequacy of hypermarkets or district shopping centres as a solution to central area pressures is even greater than it would be in some less distinguished town. There is, of course, a great deal of trade from the residents of Cambridge itself, and more from the rest of the sub-region. A hypermarket built somewhere outside Cambridge, or on its edge, would attract convenience trade from these residents of the city and the sub-region, but the expanded population would still look upon central Cambridge as the source of major purchases. The growth of tourism and purchasing power would more than make up for the historic centre's loss of some convenience trade, and what we would see would be a continued increase in pressure there. It would be at a lower rate than would occur if, instead of the hypermarket, we had no further development. Provided the hypermarket is big enough, it would also be at a lower rate than would occur if the Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street development goes ahead. But it would still be a positive and noticeable increase in pressure. A ring of such hypermarkets or district centres would compete with each other rather than with the historic centre.

The only effective way of removing pressure from an existing shopping centre is to create a competing centre of similar quality, far enough away for it never to become merged with what it is supposed to relieve. It would need to be done rapidly but cautiously. If it is too slow then the growth of pressures will change the existing centre. There will be not only redevelopment but also a bigger, or more prosperous, centre with which to compete. On the other hand, if it is overdone there could be empty shops in both places.

A second centre for Cambridge would need to have shops in much the same range as the existing centre. One could think of a centre that starts as a hypermarket and develops at first into a more 'popular' centre, without quite as many top quality shops as the historic centre now has. But even at that stage it would need some good stores, and preferably a department store. In other words, it should be possible for the people of Cambridge and the sub-region to purchase in that new centre almost anything that they now purchase in the historic centre. Less than this will fail to relieve the pressure sufficiently for our purpose to be accomplished.



Let us consider what a second centre of this size and quality would mean. We are already contemplating the demolition of a great deal of shopping in the Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street area, and its replacement by new shops amounting to about 600,000 square feet. A brand new shopping centre of about the same size as the existing historic centre need involve no demolition, but would require about 1,200,000 square feet. It should, in terms of investment resources, cost rather less than double the cost of the Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street development.

On the other hand, it need not, and should not, be done all at once. Indeed, it would probably be disastrous if it were done all at once, because the expansion of floor space would then be out of all proportion to the growth of spending. In Part Two of this report we look in detail at the level of sub-regional population that would be needed to sustain a second centre of a size commensurate with, and effectively complementary to, the existing centre. The answer depends on factors such as the rate of growth of income and changes in the efficiency of shops, but a reasonable illustration of our findings is that a new shopping centre about 90% as attractive as the present centre would need a sub-region population growth of about 50% if both the new centre and the old centre are to be reasonably flourishing. Thirty per cent growth is already committed. The rest of the growth would need to be in the right places.

This is a highly important finding. It means that a growth of this magnitude in the sub-region's population could, without detriment to the existing centre, support a second centre large enough for it to be effective not only in taking pressure off the present centre but also as a focus for any further growth. It could tip the balance, and enable the commercial pressures of the future to be accommodated some miles away from the historic centre that is now in so much jeopardy. But a lower growth, with no promise of achieving this higher level, would inevitably add to the pressures on central Cambridge unless its traders were enticed into the new centre, leaving empty properties behind them. In due course, no doubt, many of these would be taken over by colleges, not necessarily with aesthetically acceptable alterations in mind.

As population growth of this magnitude is perhaps beyond the levels normally associated with growth in this area. Much of it would arise out of commitments, but there would still be need to provide for perhaps another 80,000 people. We have to consider some of the implications of this.

Without yet considering where such a second centre should be, it is clear that this size of population growth is incompatible with traditional dispersal. Moreover, it would be stretching the concept of cluster dispersal. Yet its location is a problem that contains the elements of its own solution, for the principal reason for restricting the growth of Cambridge has been an attempt to save the historic centre and the university area. If that aim can be achieved through the establishment of a second centre then the main reason for opposing growth of the city has gone. The sensible solution is to locate a second centre and an associated urban growth in such a way that the success of the second centre is guaranteed at least cost to the character of Cambridge and the area around it.

There is no point in not facing this issue. A viable and effective second centre is the only way that we have found that stands a reasonable chance of conserving historic Cambridge. It cannot be sustained by any dispersal policy unless that is carried to lengths that would threaten to become environmentally unacceptable or extremely uneconomic. The alternative is an expansion of the city. This could have many economic advantages, and it need not be aesthetically objectionable. It presents a challenge. If we accept it and are sufficiently determined and single-minded we can win. If we reject it we will be bidding farewell to half of historic Cambridge.

We have examined many possibilities for the expansion of Cambridge in a way that would meet these objectives. Two possibilities eventually emerged as quite definitely superior to the others. One involves an expansion of the city to the east, with a new centre just east of Marshall's Airport. The other involves extension in the south, with a new centre not far from the new Addenbroke's hospital. Before considering these we should make some general points.

The continuing growth of expenditure in the historic centre, increasing traffic problems and, if my recommendations are accepted, the rejection or, at worst, approval for only a very reduced scale of development



at Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street, present both the need and the opportunity for a rapid initial development of a second centre. We consider shortly some of the problems associated with this, but we should note now that, provided the development at Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street is minimal, the committed population growth of the sub-region, without any expansion of the city, could ensure the initial viability of the first stage of the new centre. If it is enough to support a net addition of 300,000 square feet at Fitzroy–Burleigh it is enough to support a comparable development in a new centre.

This, too, is important. At present various by-pass proposals are in different stages of consideration. If the city itself is to expand some of these by-passes should be completed before the expansion has gone very far. This means that there could be little effective growth of the city until about 1980.

Moreover, it seems unlikely that official decisions to accept or to reject the recommendations of this Report will be taken before 1974. If they are accepted it would still be 1976 or later before a structure plan could be submitted to the Department of the Environment, and probably 1977 or later before a final decision is made. Detailed designs would still have to be prepared. The initial implementation could conceivably get under way in 1978 or 1979. Once more, there would be little effective city growth until 1980.

But the new centre need not wait until then, nor should it if the historic centre is to be saved. It could begin almost at once with a properly located hypermarket, encouraged by an announcement of the intention to develop a cluster of villages in that area in such a way that it would permit integration into a subsequent city expansion if that policy is eventually adopted. There seems for example, to be little to prevent the city's local authority housing programme from providing some houses in the vicinity of the proposed new centre even as early as 1977, without necessarily any agreement to develop on the scale of an expanded city.

In any case, it should not be looked upon simply as a shopping centre. There is scope for office development on a sub-regional scale. Entertainment facilities, including perhaps a leisure centre can be located close by. Everything that helps to focus the activities of people, and so to make the new centre tick, will help it to succeed.

Two other points must be made. The economic and commercial success of this second centre will require a rapid increase in local population and the provision of good access to it for existing population. This has implications for the construction industry, and those engaged in the provision of basic services. We believe that they can be met. It also has implications for the growth of employment. All the indications are that the problems here will arise not in getting new jobs into the area but in turning away jobs that are of an unacceptable kind. Obviously an expanded city can and should be used to provide a wider range of jobs: but there is no need to create a second Cowley.

There are, of course, many other matters to be taken into account, including the impact on existing expansion schemes elsewhere. These are examined later in the report, but it is important to say now that it seems highly unlikely that city expansions will prejudice expansion in other towns.

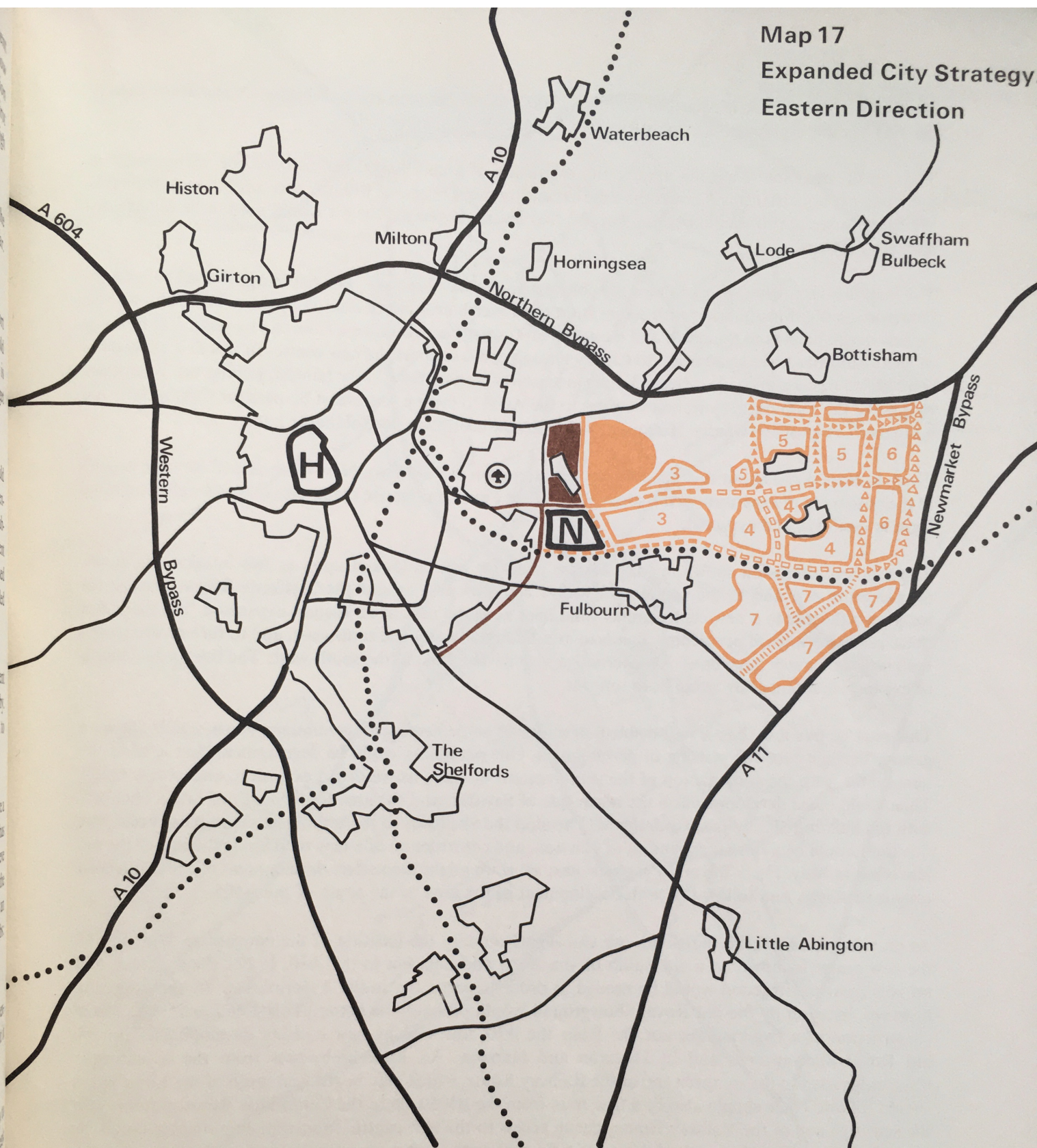
We now look at the two areas where city expansion could best be undertaken. The expansion of the city to its east could proceed along lines indicated in Map 17 (see page 69). The area is defined by the strategic road structure involving the A45 and the A11, and the existing urban area.

Between the existing city and the low lying area of Little Wilbraham Fen and Great Wilbraham River one could accommodate both a new sub-regional centre and a housing and employment development for a population of about 24,000. Here we are not thinking of row after row of dreary development, but of a well designed and landscaped form that can be both functionally and aesthetically pleasing. The planning authority already has people on its staff who are eminently capable of achieving it.

To the east of the Fen areas, adjacent to the Wilbrahams, and extending as far as the Newmarket by-pass there is room for another 40,000 people, with associated employment located partly along the A45 in the



Map 17  
Expanded City Strategy  
Eastern Direction



### KEY

- Existing and committed development
- Historic centre
- Strategic roads
- Other principal roads
- Operational railways
- Proposed new development
- Proposed new sub-regional centre

### PHASING

|   | Urban development | Corresponding roads |
|---|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1 |                   |                     |
| 2 |                   |                     |
| 3 |                   |                     |
| 4 |                   |                     |
| 5 |                   |                     |
| 6 |                   |                     |



north of the area. There is room for another 25,000 people between the Cambridge–Newmarket railway, the A11 and the Fulbourn–Balsham Road.

Thus, in the area shown on the map, a city expansion of about 90,000 people could be accommodated. Let me say at once that this is larger than the expansion that I propose. But it is necessary to look forwards. We can also see that if ever expansion beyond that level is envisaged then it would need to be outside this neat road system.

The map indicates what seems to be a sensible phasing of development. The first stage should contain the construction of a hypermarket with access from the Teversham–Cherry Hinton by-pass. There should also be new developments to the north and the south of Teversham, with access from the by-pass. The building of local authority housing adjacent to Cherry Hinton could support the new centre. In this first stage there should also be certain road works including an easterly by-pass for Cherry Hinton, joining the Teversham by-pass to the Fulbourn Road; an extension to the A604 to form a south-east by-pass for Cambridge; and a northern by-pass for Cherry Hinton, linking the new centre site to Coldhams Lane.

There is more detail about this possible eastern expansion in Part Two. Now we look with similar brevity at the possibility of expansion in the south. Once more I must emphasise that a pleasing and well-integrated form is essential, and expected.

The southern extension shown in Map 18 (see page 71) can be looked upon as two interlocking zones, to the south-east and to the south-west, with a common area around the Shelfords. The arguments for early growth close to a new centre are as valid here as in the case of an eastern expansion, but thereafter there are three ways of proceeding. One is to expand first towards the south-east, and to turn to the south-west only at a much later date. An alternative is to develop first in the south-west. The third possibility is to expand simultaneously along both tongues.

This part of our area has a well-defined structure of settlements and communications, which allows a greater flexibility for the phasing of development. One possibility could be development first around the new centre, with the construction of the south-eastern by-pass, its westward extension, and access roads. Then could come development on the north side of Sawston and the area to the south of Little Shelford, with the building of a by-pass from the M11 around the Shelfords to the south-eastern by-pass. Following this there could be a further expansion of Sawston, and construction of a new road along the line of the old Haverhill railway. From the many possible next steps we might then select development of the south-west tongue in stages, and follow this with development of the area to the south of the A505.

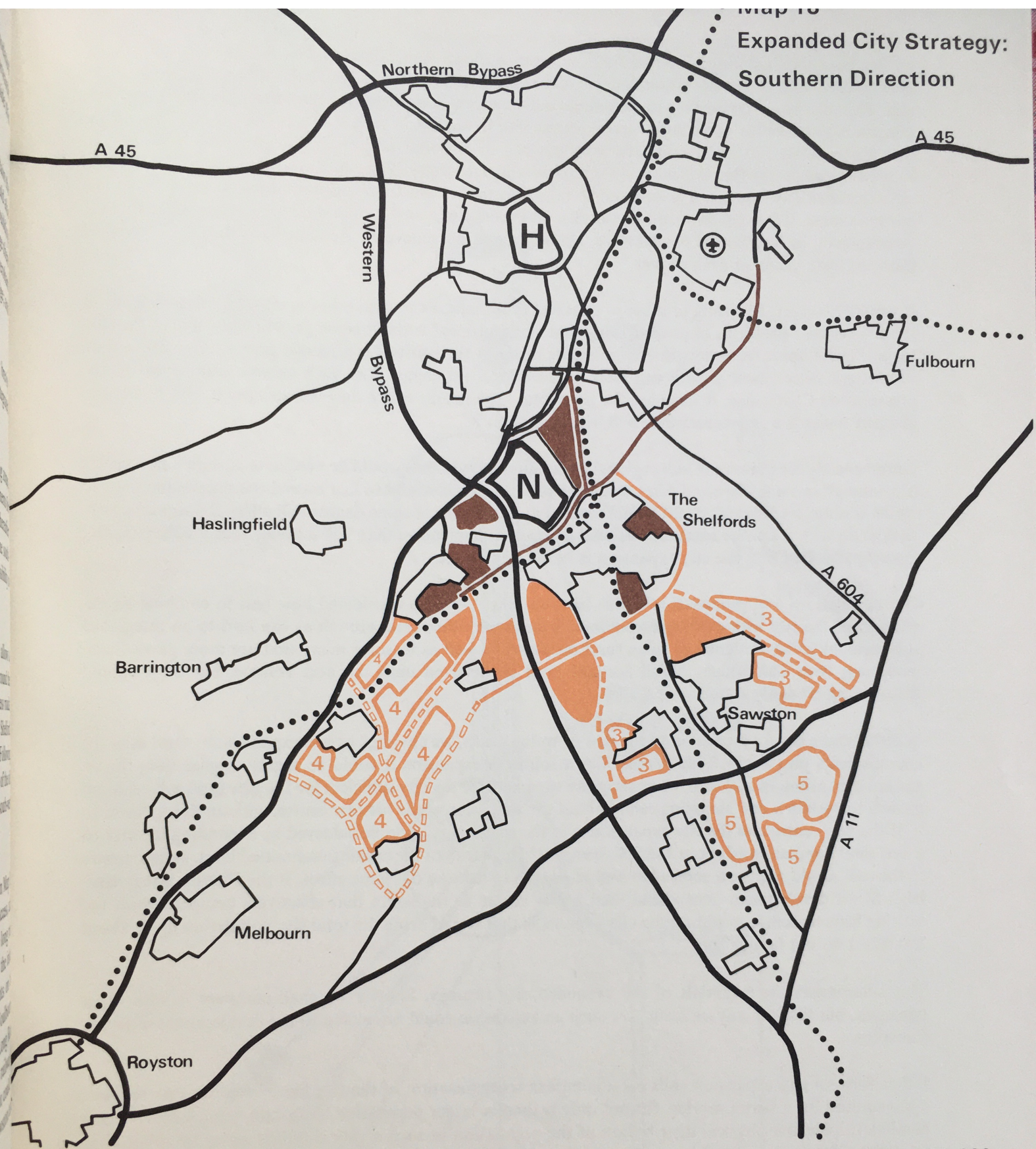
As an example of another possibility we can slightly change the location of the new centre. On Map 18 the new centre is shown on a site south of the A130 and adjacent to the A10. It has good access, and no new road construction would be needed in order to serve the initial hypermarket. In the long run, however, location by the old Royal Showground would probably be better. This could entail the initial construction of a hypermarket not far from the A10, followed by new housing developments on the old Royal Showground, and in Hauxton and Harston. An easterly by-pass from the Foulbourn–Cambridge road to the southern end of the Railway Route, which may be realised south of the Long Road should follow. There should also be a new road from the B1050 along the Cambridge–Royston railway to the southern end of the Railway Route, giving access to the new centre. Industrial employment could be located on the A10 to the south of the western by-pass, with further new employment in the Sawston area.

The area shown in Map 18 could accommodate a population growth larger than that indicated in the eastern expansion shown on Map 17 (see page 69) and obviously one could extend the south-western tongue much further if, at some very remote date, this seemed to be desirable. Such growth would clearly focus on the new centre, rather than on the historic centre.

Although these two schemes may seem completely to change the character of Cambridge we have to try to look at them dispassionately, and to assess the scale of expansion that would be involved in them. Let us remember why we began to think in these terms. Some growth of the sub-region has already been accepted.



Map 10  
Expanded City Strategy:  
Southern Direction



KEY

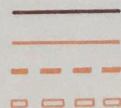
- Existing and committed development
- Historic centre
- Strategic roads
- Other principal roads
- Operational railways
- Proposed new development
- Proposed new sub-regional centre

PHASING

- |   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
|   | Urban development |
| 1 |                   |
| 2 |                   |
| 3 |                   |
| 4 |                   |
| 5 |                   |

SCALE 1:100,000

Corresponding roads





Existing commitments allow expansion of about 30% in its population. This is going to exert great pressure on the centre of Cambridge, and the Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street development will provide only a temporary relief—and that in a location that will make further easing of pressure on the historic centre very difficult. The only way of conserving the buildings and character of the historic centre that we have been able to imagine is to provide a new centre that competes with it, but not in such a way as to injure it. This means that a new centre has to have at least a certain degree of population expansion associated with it, and located in such a way that it is natural for it to use the new centre. The whole concept of a new centre and the associated city expansion is designed to take pressure off old Cambridge in order to conserve it. The choice is stark. Either conserve old Cambridge on the edge of a new Cambridge, or let some other form of development, be it dispersed or otherwise, almost completely redevelop the historic centre within the next thirty or forty years, or even sooner.

It would, however, be wrong to think of a second centre and a city expansion as either a solution to all of the sub-region's problems or as something that could proceed without some growth elsewhere in the sub-region. Quite apart from growth commitments made in the spirit of a dispersal policy, there are certain rural areas where local growth can help to solve local problems. Any such growth contributes to the pressures on Cambridge. If these are focussed onto the historic centre they will destroy it. But if they are directed towards a new centre they will help to sustain it.

Unfortunately the amount of sub-regional population growth that would be needed to sustain a new centre if it were all in some dispersed form would be very high, and would in fact exceed the reasonable limit to which traditional dispersal could be pushed. A city expansion of some degree will allow the second centre to flourish with a smaller total sub-regional increase in population than will a policy that involves no city growth, provided that the city expansion is in the right place.

Our calculations and proposals take this into account. We have considered how best to combine an expansion of the city with existing commitments and such other rural growth as can lead to an integrated sub-regional policy designed to solve rural problems as well as to solve many that are more particularly associated with Cambridge. A full account must be deferred until the next volume, but the essential features can be easily stated.

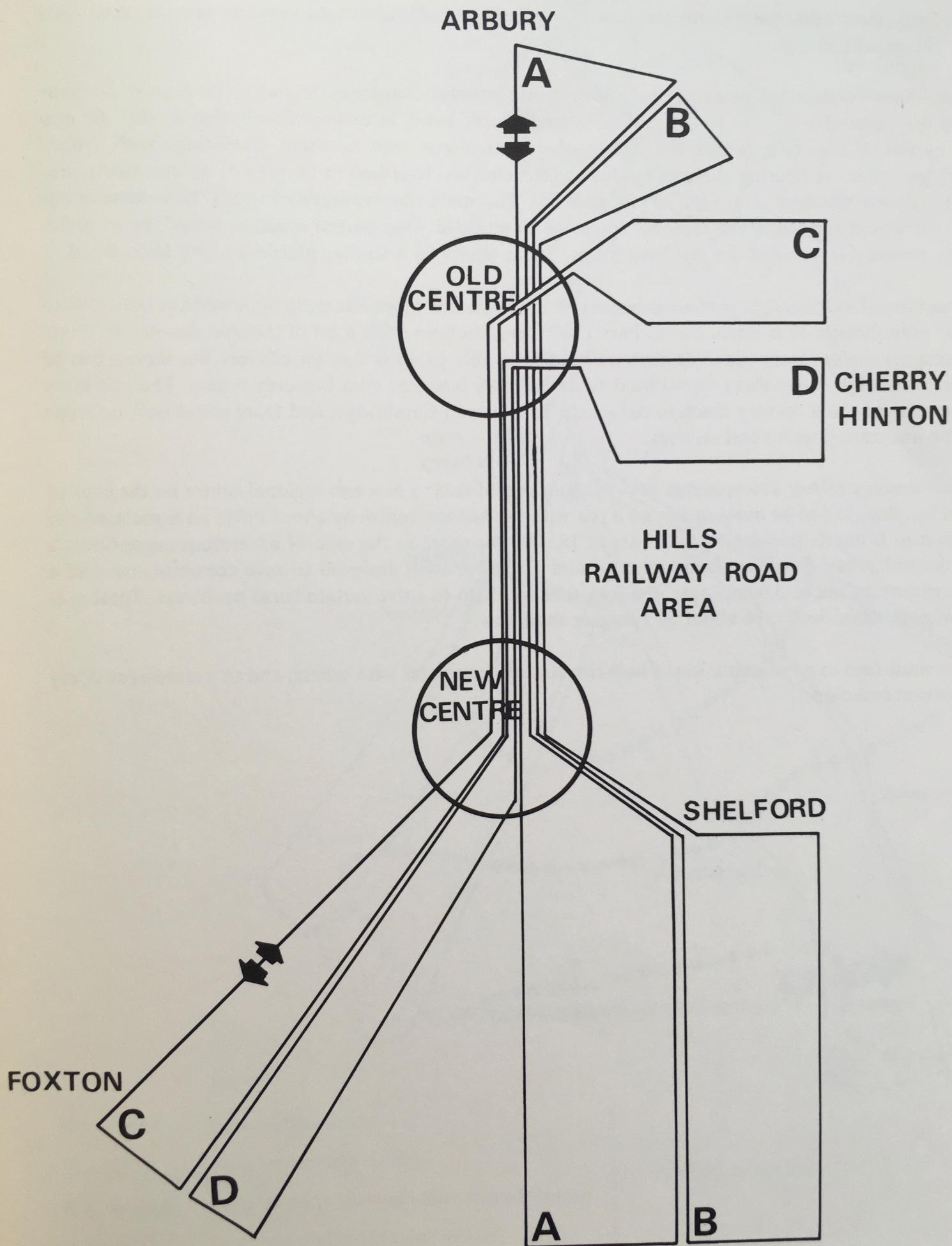
Whether there be city expansion to the east or to the south, we envisage a total expansion in rural areas of commitments plus about 5,000 people. For a southern expansion it could be slightly higher than for an eastern expansion. In addition, we envisage an expansion of the city sufficient for the new total sub-regional growth to sustain a new shopping centre about the same size as the historic centre, without doing harm to it. If the new centre and the city expansion is to the south, this could be achieved by expanding the city to a new total population of about 185,000, being 50% higher than the existing committed level. A new centre to the east would require a somewhat higher growth to achieve the same effect. If the Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street development goes ahead then a new centre to the south that effectively competes with the existing historic centre would need a city expansion that would bring the total city population up to about 230,000. I do not favour this.

This summarises the essentials of the expanded city strategy. Shortly we shall compare it with other strategies, but first we may indicate how such an expansion could be related to the development of public transport.

Either form of city expansion calls for a complete reorganization of the city bus-system. It also provides opportunities for a better service, for not only is there a larger population to sustain it but also it is now possible to plan the physical distribution of the population in such a way that bus travel becomes more attractive. This is considered in much more detail in Part Two, but the main conclusions can usefully be indicated here. We do so only for the southern expansion, although in Part Two we look in equal detail at both expansions.

Let us begin with a diagrammatic representation of what we call a 'foundation system'. It is shown in Map 19 (see page 73) and consists of four two-way loops, each running through both the old centre and the







new centre, and extending into the areas beyond these. They look like distorted hour glasses. The primary aim of the services is to provide access to the old and new centres, and to the concentration of employment in the Station Road area. For example, a bus would leave Arbury and move down through the historic centre, along Hills Road, and then via Brooklands Avenue to Trumpington Road, and the new centre. From there it would go through the south-eastern development and loop back to the new centre, the old centre, and north Cambridge. Another bus would ply the same route in the opposite direction. Other permutations, such as a clockwise route in the north and a counter-clockwise route in the south could be fitted into the system, turning the hour glass route into a figure of eight route.

Similar loops from other parts north and east run through the old centre and then the new centre to some part of the expanded city.

This foundation system has great potential, but it also has disadvantages. In particular it provides poor links to the hospital area, and would seldom induce people living in eastern Cambridge to visit the new centre by bus. It also fails to link the two southern extensions, and northern Cambridge with eastern Cambridge. After considering these and other deficiencies, as described in Part Two, we eventually produced the system represented in Map 20 (see page 75). The main disadvantage of this is the volume of bus traffic that would run along the famous 'spine' of Cambridge. One partial solution would be to utilise Victoria Avenue for some of the northern loops. There would be a similar problem along Hills Road.

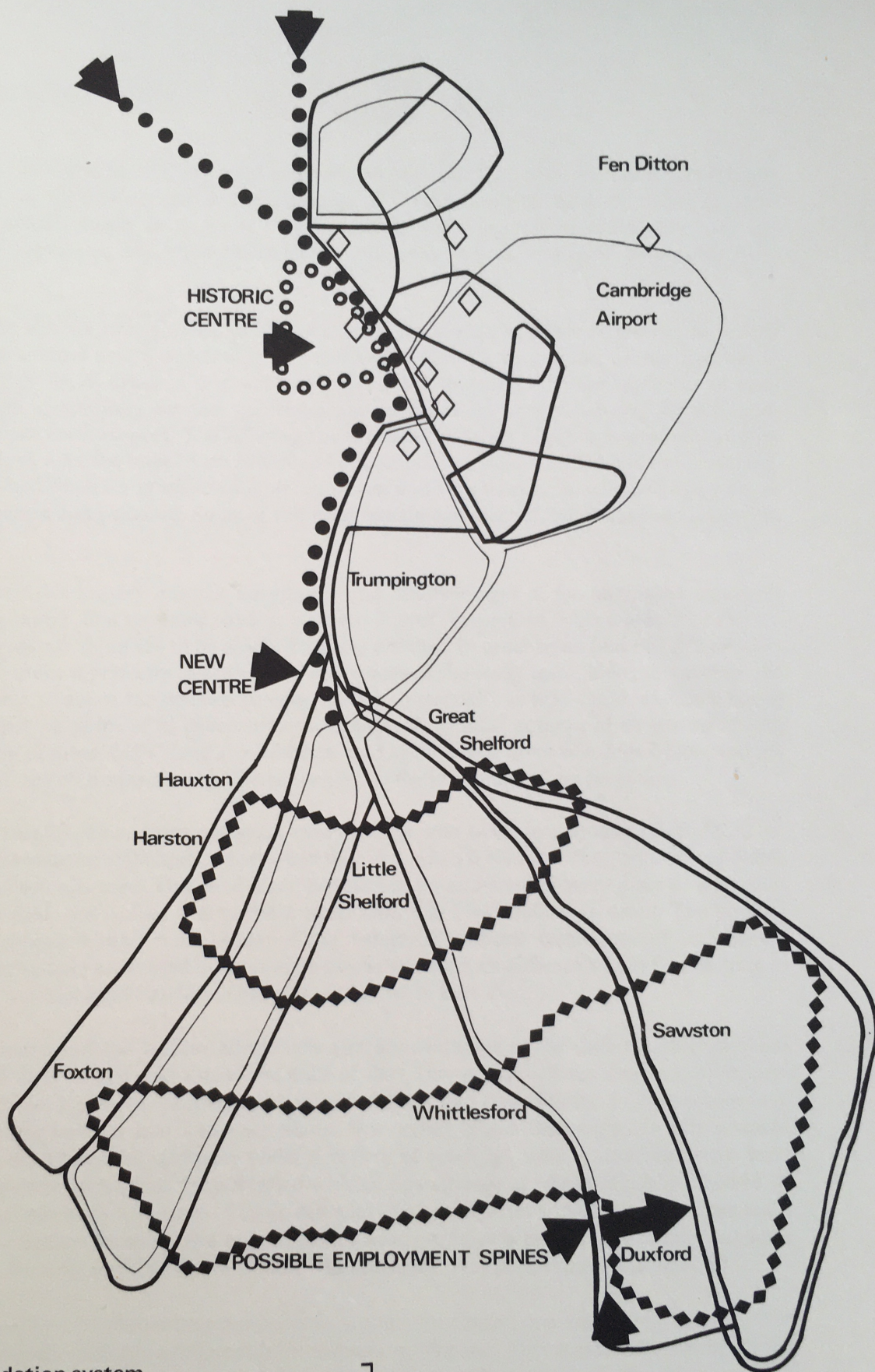
Consideration of matters such as these is important and warrants more attention than we have been able to provide, even though, as is evident from Part Two, there has been quite a bit of thought devoted to them. What is quite evident from the work that we have been able to do is that an efficient bus service can be devised, but that in places there would need to be bus-only lanes, or even bus-only routes. The operation of these services could do very much to reduce car pressures in Cambridge, and there could well be scope for some integration with rural services.

Thus our strategy called 'an expanded city' has four ingredients: a new sub-regional centre on the edge of Cambridge, designed to be more or less on a par with the historic centre by about 1991; an associated city expansion to bring its population up to about 185,000 (or more in the case of an eastern expansion); a newly devised urban public transport system; and a rural growth designed to take commitments and a further growth of about 5,000 people in a way that will help to solve certain rural problems. Total sub-regional population would be about 50% higher than now.

Now we must turn to an examination of how this strategy compares with others, and to a statement of my final recommendation.



Map 20  
Potential Outline Route Structure



KEY

- Foundation system
- - - Supplementary system
- • • • • Loop service through Girton and Histon
- ○ ○ ○ ○ Special service loop for West
- ◇ Main existing employment

All two-way loops



## MY MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

In this part of the Report I have placed very great emphasis on one objective. Almost all of it is concerned with taking pressures off the historic centre of Cambridge. It would, however, be quite wrong to judge between alternative policies simply in terms of their success in achieving this objective. The rate and location of growth of population and employment have many consequences, and as far as possible these have to be spelt out.

We have looked at the various strategies outlined above, each at a variety of levels of growth, to see the advantages and disadvantages over a wide range of activities. In Part Two we report on our findings in some detail, and further detail exists in our working papers. We looked at the consequences of each strategy for agriculture, community services, environmental conservation and recreation. We also considered their implications for transport. The differing consequences in terms of job opportunities and incomes were examined, as were the impacts on health and educational services, tourism and the university. In all of this we consulted wherever possible with official bodies and various experts, who willingly gave us a great deal of information and guidance. Some of this must remain confidential, but it has been taken into account.

The results of this extensive inquiry into the advantages and disadvantages of the alternative strategies showed, as one would expect, that no single strategy was best in every respect. In other words, in making a choice between strategies one thing has to be weighed against another. In order to do that one has to select some scales. I want to make it perfectly clear that while members of the study team, aided by officials and other experts, attempted to assess the detailed consequences as impartially as they could, and then stated which strategy was 'best' in terms of its effects on agriculture, which 'best' in terms of its income effects, and so on, the weighing of these 'bests' (and second-bests, etc.) against each other was done by me, and my scales were quite simply my own considered judgment resting on the knife-edge of my prejudices.

This requires a little amplification. In recent years many people who work in planning have placed increasing reliance on quantitative techniques. More often than not, when it comes to the evaluation of plans, these techniques have been mis-used. This should not be taken as an attack upon every piece of work that has been done in this field, but it does summarise a conclusion that I can defend in detail. The popular 'goals-achievement' approach, and much sounder but extremely difficult techniques of cost-benefit analysis, are not the techniques to be used in choosing between strategies as different and as far reaching as those that we are now considering. I develop this argument further in Part Two.

The study team's evaluation of the various advantages and disadvantages of the different strategies was very detailed. To publish all of it would extend the scale of Part Two beyond all reasonable proportions. However, when the studies had been completed the team met for a two-day seminar, in my absence, and examined the various assessments that had been made. Summaries of the discussions in this seminar, including rankings of the alternative strategies under a variety of headings, were written up by the team members. In Part Two these summaries are published without any attempt at editing. Each is followed by my own brief comment. Anybody who cares to do so can read these summaries and consider the arguments presented in them. He can then form his own opinion about which strategy is best. It may or may not agree with my own opinion. If it does not then I hope that he will keep some very important points in mind.

The first point is that we have to choose between collections of consequences, one interacting with the other in such a way as to make the collection different from the sum of its parts. This is easily illustrated. Given a single choice I would always prefer oranges to mushrooms. Similarly I would prefer gin to sherry, and cheese to cream. But if I am offered a collection of oranges, gin and cheese or a collection of mushrooms, sherry and cream I will choose the latter. My individual second preferences form a collection that allows me to make a delightful sauce which I prefer to anything that I can produce from the collection of my first



preferences. We have to choose between one version of the sub-region and another; and each version is a complicated interacting collection. I consider this point further in Part Two.

The second point is that we speak of a 'version of the sub-region' we have to think not of some static description but of an evolving set of activities, opportunities, constraints and spatial arrangements. If we choose between two strategies by considering which will produce the better, or more pleasing, sub-region in the year 1991, we may be making a bad choice if we fail to ask questions about how the sub-region would look in 1981, and 1986, and in years after 1991. We are not making a choice for a single date. We are choosing between different trajectories of change, each extending further than we can see.

We have also to remember that many different people, and different kinds of people, will be living through these changing years. Some will have incomes much lower than others. Some will be retired. Some will be young and adventurous. There will be people of different origins, backgrounds, tastes and training. All of these different people will require different things, and place different values upon conservation, employment opportunities, quiet, lack of disturbance, leisure facilities, transport and so on. There are also people not living in the sub-region who will be affected by the way in which it changes. Whether we use judgment or sophisticated quantitative techniques, somehow we must try to keep all this in mind. I know of no quantitative techniques that do so.

Having said all of this, let me now state my preference, which must in any case be obvious in its main content from the way in which I have developed the argument in this part of the Report. I am recommending an expansion of the city, preferably to the south, about a new centre, with no comprehensive redevelopment in the Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street area. I also recommend the development of a public transport system as an integral part of city expansion. Finally, I recommend rural growth in certain areas, in order to help to solve local problems, and the development of improved transport facilities in rural areas.

In explanation, and amplification, of this preference let me begin by emphasising that while it stems from what I consider to be the over-riding importance of conserving central Cambridge it has very strong arguments in its favour for other reasons. Nevertheless, there are many who will view with horror both my recommendation that the Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street project should not proceed and my proposal that Cambridge should undergo a sizeable expansion. It is necessary to consider these two sources of disagreement.

It is always extremely difficult to persuade people who have for many years become publicly committed to a course of action that, however right they might once have been, time has changed things so much that now their committed course is wrong. Every yachtsman knows that to get to the right harbour he may have to change his course completely if, with the passage of time, winds and tides cease to be as they were. It is the harbour rather than the course that is important to him.

Those who have now for twenty years or more advocated the enlargement of shopping in Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street have been doing so with one aim in view: to take pressure off the historic centre. Some have unfortunately thought more in terms of traffic pressure than of commercial pressure. When the scheme was first mooted twenty years ago, at a time when few people foresaw the magnitude of changes in car ownership, or the scale of growth of the villages around Cambridge, it could conceivably have been the right approach. I do not know. It is easy with hindsight to say that even then it was wrong, but I was not thinking about Cambridge in those days. If I had been then I, too, might have been an advocate of that scheme.

What matters is that, fortunately or otherwise, we are all thinking about it today: and the question that we have to ask is, 'Given Cambridge as it is today, given what we have learned from the past, and given such knowledge as we have today about the future, what is the best thing to do now?' That, indeed, is the basic question that was put to me at the outset by those who commissioned this study. The position today is that we can still reconsider the desirability of Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street redevelopment with the benefit, if I may here presume to use that word, of having had it more fully explored not simply for its contribution towards meeting the needs of shoppers but also for its consequences for Cambridge. When this scheme



was first put forwards it was designed as a means of taking pressure off the historic centre. That was its very purpose. It is clear to me that it would not now succeed in that purpose. Moreover, it would prevent the success of the one scheme of which I know that could take pressure off the centre. I am hoping that people who have supported the Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street scheme for so many years will be sufficiently detached, statesmanlike, academic, and concerned for Cambridge, to stand back and to consider the arguments that I present here and in Part Two.

Let me add just one point, that may help to convince some who are wavering. In Part Two there is an account of a computer model that we developed as one technique for generating some alternative strategies for the sub-region. We began to devise it in February 1972, about nine months after the study began. As we report in Part Two, not only could we never have arrived at a strategy involving a new centre if we had relied entirely on that model, but we have had to go to a great deal of trouble to adapt the model so that it can first receive the instruction that there is to be a new centre, and then set about generating strategies that include it. I hasten to add that in fact the strategy recommended by me has not emerged in this way, for reasons that are made clear in Part Two. The point I am making is that in February 1972 the idea of a second centre was far from my mind. I was then searching for a solution to this vital problem of how to reconcile the role of Cambridge as a sub-regional centre with a desire to conserve the historic city. I was beginning to despair for I could see the strength of commercial pressures and the inadequacy of the Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street scheme as a long term solution: but I could find no answer.

When, at some time in the summer of that year, the idea of a second centre remote from the existing one arose, I was at first sceptical. Writing in 1956, in his Guide to the Cambridge Plan, commissioned by the Cambridgeshire County Planning Department, Derek Senior had emphasised the nature of commercial pressures. He had made it clear that the extent of these was not entirely within the control of the local planning authority, because this authority could not 'prevent any large scale town development in one or other of the neighbouring counties, such as may well be undertaken to accommodate part of the overspill from Greater London. In that event the importance of Cambridge as a regional capital would certainly be enhanced, and with it the prosperity of its central area shops'. He then went on to state that it was 'probable, however, that the resulting rise in the floor space requirements of the specialist and quality shops would be only marginal, and there might be an offsetting loss to the new or expanded towns of rural customers for goods of a more general type'.

It is clear from his wording, and from his subsequent reference to this argument as a 'problematical consideration', that he was not sure of his final conclusion here. And in fact it appears to have been wrong. There has been a far from marginal rise in floor space requirements because of sub-regional growth and it was clear to me that the demand was likely to continue to rise with the further growth of population and income throughout the sub-region. Following the Holford Report, Senior had argued that quite apart from the possibility of a population growth outside the control of the local planning authority there was need of a substantial net addition to commercial floor space in the central area: and it had to be in the right place. Recent changes in land values had shown convincingly that the commercial centre of gravity was shifting slowly south-eastwards. There was scope left for only a very limited development on the existing street frontages, but there was 'ample room on the neglected back land of the ten-acre block between St. Andrew's Street and Corn Exchange Street, part of which consists of the Lion Yard. . . .' This was where the new shopping was to go, and it was to be noted that the Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street area 'provides a useful safety valve in case the pressure of demand for floor space should exceed the capacity of the old centre to meet it without jeopardising its own essential character'. But the function of a safety valve is to let off steam when pressures become too high. It is not to provide a second chamber in which they can build up. If that is done, what happens when there, too, the pressures are too high? The chances are that the pipe between the chambers explodes: and the historic centre and Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street become one large centre, with commercial pressures building up throughout it, and redevelopment of the older buildings preceding that of the new. This is a picture that I have already portrayed. At the time that it became so clear to me, I could see no alternative but to recommend a very severe tightening of constraints on the growth of population and employment, throughout the whole sub-region, and a much more rigorous enforcement of redevelopment controls. Yet that was not a solution to the basic problem. Sooner or later it would fail.



I believe that it was in August 1972, at the seminar held in Manchester, that the idea of a detached second centre first arose. I went back to all that had been argued about shopping and the size of the City, for it was clear that a second centre could exist only in an expanded city. Amongst the vast amount that had been written were the following remarks by Derek Senior:

'We come now to the second of the two dominant functions of the central core of Cambridge—commerce. If the needs of the University and colleges are given first consideration, and met as generously as the Plan proposes, is it possible at the same time to satisfy the demands of the shopkeepers and the businessmen, and yet preserve the traditional character of the city centre? This character, be it remembered, consists not only in the integration of academic and urban life, but also in the irregular medieval pattern of narrow streets and footways, in the contrasts of architectural form, and above all in the modesty of scale that permits academic buildings of only moderate height to retain "a suitable pre-eminence".

If no limits were set to the further growth of the city and its surrounding villages the answer would certainly have to be "No". Nowhere is the fact so plain as in the city centre that "one cannot make a good expanding plan for Cambridge".

If the city's population were doubled (as it would be by the end of this century if it grew at Oxford's pace) only two courses would be open. Either a new centre would have to be built further east, or the existing centre would have to be changed out of all recognition, with widened and straightened streets, office blocks and department stores towering over the old college buildings—and no room to spare for new ones. Either solution would destroy for ever the familiar character of the University Town.'

This seemed to be so obviously right except for two words that between them contained an answer that was probably not intended by their author: 'further east'. The probable meaning of these words was 'a little to the east, in the vicinity of Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street'. But as they were written, less precisely, they pointed in a direction that went past Marshall's Airport. I wondered whether, if a new centre were built as far east as that, we 'would destroy for ever the familiar character of the University Town'. Certainly it would affect the town: but possibly it would be more successful in preserving its fabric and character than would some other measures.

We explored the possibilities of a second centre to the east of Marshall's Airport with some scepticism. Members of the team urged upon me that a site to the south of the City would be a better location, but they were sceptical of that, and I was even more sceptical. There were two fundamental problems: how could it be done without destroying the character of Cambridge, and how could it be made to do the trick?

It is perhaps ironical that I should have reached the conclusion that the City must grow in order to retain as much of its character as it can. The fact is that we are already committed to a great increase of pressure on the City centre. Development at Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street would effectively relieve it for not much more than ten years. Do we then seek another safety valve? And another? If the commercial redevelopment of the centre is to be effectively controlled, these commercial pressures that already exist and are bound to grow must be diverted to a new focus, where they can build up not just for ten years, but for the next hundred years if things work out that way, without doing harm to central Cambridge. Yet if that new focus is to exist, it has to be put there and nurtured long enough for it to secure a vitality of its own. That can be done only if there is a certain amount of additional population.

Slowly we become less sceptical of this argument. I was not finally convinced until as late as July 1973, when the final results of our shopping analysis and the various evaluative studies emerged. All of this is described in Part Two, and some of it has been summarised in the preceding chapters. Here I can simply report that I am quite convinced that the only way to conserve the historic centre is to have a new centre; that the best place for this is to the south, as described in Chapter 7, while the second best is to the east; that it will require a city growth of about 60,000 persons beyond existing commitments; and that with sensitive planning this can be achieved without detriment to the overall character of the city. Moreover, I feel sure that if we do not do this, or if we dilly dally in either a reluctance to face facts or an attempt to



find some other effective solution, then the commercial pressures upon Cambridge will so change its centre that the only reasons for objecting to growth will be those that can be produced by any town of this size. It comes to a clash between conserving the character of the centre and much that is around it, at the price of growth on an edge, and of conserving the size of the City at the price of redevelopment of its centre. I am on the side of growth, because I am on the side of the historic centre.

I have also argued that for the new centre to get off the ground, the proposed expansion of Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street shopping should be stopped. In this case obviously we would need to re-think the future of that area. Much of it is of good environmental value, which is important partly because of its proximity to the historic centre. Christ's Pieces and Butt Green are important open spaces. New Square is one of Cambridge's best domestic squares even though it is at present a car park (which indicates just how far we are prepared to go in order to accommodate pressures). Maid's Causeway, Willow Walk and Orchard St. are good environmental areas. The broad expanse of Fitzroy Street could well be a pedestrianised area of quality. There is great potential here for a mixed land-use pattern involving the same amount of shopping floor space as now, and sensitive residential development and rehabilitation, along with some university development.

In estimating the impact of the second centre we have assumed that the existing lesser shopping centres, such as those in Mill Road and Hills Road, will continue to function; and their trading pattern is such that this assumption is sensible. A new centre without population growth might be detrimental to them. Indeed, an expanded Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street might be detrimental to them. But my proposals should not be.

It is said that at present Cambridge is such that its residents can readily identify themselves with all parts of it; that to the average resident there are not large areas of unknown ground which he cannot see as part of his city. This is true. It is also true that in an expanded city this would be less so. Indeed, one might find some people looking upon themselves as residents of Old Cambridge, and others as residents of New Cambridge. This kind of distinction would probably be inevitable. It is similar to that existing in many towns. I do not think that it is a distinction to be welcomed, but it need not be in all respects deplored, and I would consider it to be some indication that the residents of Old Cambridge were still proud of that part of the City in which they lived. They would be less proud of it if it were to have its centre spoiled much further. Towns do not stand still. What we must try to do is to encourage them to change along the least unacceptable lines.

I have not here extolled the other benefits of growth, such as variety of employment and better opportunities for leisure activities, health services and so on. There are both advantages and disadvantages, which are assessed in Part Two. My purpose here has been to focus on the important issue. I hope that other people will do the same.

Let me now come to some of the detail. We considered a variety of strategies that embodied the idea of a new centre. Some, called 'High Growth Strategies' envisaged a sub-regional growth of as much as 105,000 people in excess of existing commitments. Others, called 'Low Growth Strategies' envisaged growth over twenty years of 38,000 more than commitments. And there were others in between. This was done in order to make assessments of the advantages and disadvantages of different forms and scales of change while we were still uncertain of how much growth would be needed in order to make a new centre of sufficient size viable. As we have seen, it eventually emerged that a sub-regional expansion of about 65,000 or 70,000 above commitments would enable a second centre to be viable provided that the bulk of this additional growth is located in a suitable expansion of the City.

It is, however, possible that for some reason or another those who take the decision will reject my recommendation. What, then, should be done? Moreover, what should we do between now and the time that the decision is taken? In order to answer this, let us turn for a moment to the 'Low Growth Strategies'.

If we decide in favour of low growth we should select a strategy that minimises the impact of that growth on the historic centre. The strategy that seems most effective in this respect is a low level cluster dispersal. Three well-related clusters at Sawston, Melbourn and Six Mile Bottom would maximise self-containment



in terms of district-level shopping and transportation. They would tend to react less with central Cambridge than they would if they were closer to it, but they would still add to pressures on the historic centre, just as would committed growth elsewhere. They could also contribute to the viability of an improved public transport system. Unfortunately they would not really cater for the strong economic and political pressures for growth closer to the city: and sooner or later that growth would almost certainly occur.

This gives us our key. In my view we should now proceed along the following lines:

1. First, a firm decision not to allow the enlargement of shopping floor space at Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street, coupled with a severely firm conservation policy in the historic centre, and the safeguarding of a site for a new centre, preferably close to the junction of the A10 and the Western By-pass.
2. The granting of permission for housing development in the Trumpington area, the prevention or postponement of other peripheral housing schemes, and the encouragement of applications for a hypermarket in the south, in accordance with present County policy, that would be intended as the first stage in the creation of a second centre. At the same time it should be made clear that unless it was eventually decided to proceed with the second centre, no application for a hypermarket in any other location, or for any other development that would make it more difficult for that centre to be successful, would be accepted.
3. Granting permission for more development in the Sawston area, including some employment.
4. A firm public transport policy which, by traffic management means, achieves priority for public transport from the whole of the Sawston/Shelford/Trumpington area into the Historic Centre and, preferably, serving the office area around the Railway Station. This would probably entail much stronger control of commuter car-parking in or close to the historic centre, in both public and private car parks. It would also probably involve bus-priority or bus-only lanes. The accelerated development of the Railway Route, the Western By-pass and the Shelford By-pass would facilitate it.

These steps would leave our options open, so that we could then move towards either a city expansion or the low level cluster strategy. The limited amount of growth close to the City would not seriously detract from the quality of the cluster low growth strategy, since it would be well integrated with the Sawston cluster in terms of transportation. In fact, these policies amount to a moderate expansion of the City in the south-east, and they form the logical spring-board for further development if this is wanted. An alternative would be to take a similar set of actions pointing towards the south-west along the other tongue described in Chapter 7, rather than towards the south-east.

This, at least, can be done. But the only decision that can save the historic centre is to encourage the growth of the City about a new centre, and to ensure that it does so at an adequate rate. If that decision is postponed beyond the early months of 1975 it is likely to be too late. In matters affecting Cambridge delay is like a weed that is effectively eradicated only if killed while it is still young. While delay continues so the pressures build up, and the possibility of developing a second centre quickly enough to relieve them declines.

Associated with this urban growth is a rural policy, built mainly on considerations of how to make maximum use of village colleges and to bring better facilities to the more deficient areas. This is a part of our policy that can be implemented whatever is decided about the city of Cambridge. But what we have to remember is that this part of our policy will necessarily add pressures to central Cambridge. It makes the new centre all the more important. It is, in fact, vital.

I know that I am advocating a policy which many people will find it very difficult to accept. I wish very much that I could have found some other policy that would be successful in conserving the best features of Cambridge, but would also be more easily accepted. If I could have found such a policy I would certainly have recommended it. As it is, I know that there is no certainty that my recommendations will be accepted. That means that I have no certainty that Cambridge will survive as an attractive city. To accept my recommendations will be particularly difficult for those who are committed to the Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street development or to keeping Cambridge small in order to conserve it. The weight of evidence and



argument is now against these ideas. It will take brave men now to accept this and to withdraw their support from projects and policies that they have advocated for so long. I am hoping. Cambridge has long been known as having a disproportionately high endowment of great minds. Now it can show that it is similarly endowed with great men and women, who are prepared to think afresh, and to act together, effectively, with speed and determination. Nothing less than this will do.

I know, too, that the decision about the Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street scheme now rests with the Secretary of State. At the time that the Department of the Environment initiated this study it could not have expected my views on the future of Cambridge to hinge so critically on a decision that they expected to take around the time of the completion of the study. If I could even hope that the second centre that I consider to be vital to the future of Cambridge would succeed in the presence of an increased shopping area in Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street I would say so. It would certainly make the chances of my recommendations being accepted very much higher if I could say that no scheme now with the Minister need be reconsidered. But I cannot even hope that my scheme would work in these circumstances. As I have stated in Chapter 7, it would require an expansion of the City to over double its present size for the historic centre, an expanded Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street and a new centre of sufficient size all to be viable. In view of this, and of my deep conviction that a decision to proceed with the Fitzroy Street–Burleigh Street development would ruin the one chance that we have of ensuring that the historic centre retains its better features not just for ten years, but for many generations, I have no option but to say so. I consider that to be my duty, even at this stage. It is not for me to attempt to tell the Minister where his duty in this difficult matter lies.\* His Department asked me to consider

how far is there a conflict between a policy of preserving the historic character of Cambridge . . . and a policy of allowing growth there; if it exists, how might it be resolved.

In this part of my Report I have indicated my answer to that question. The considerable supporting evidence and analysis is to be found in Part Two.

\* The original draft of Part One, completed on August 22nd, 1973, ended at this point. The remaining words were written on November 8th, at page-proof stage.



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